ENTERTAINMENT / A4-1

Ruffa to get 50 kilos of gold in case of separation

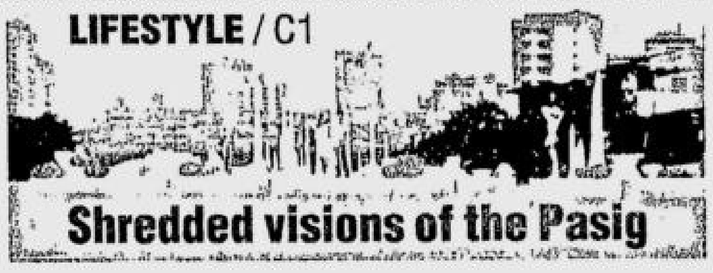
WORLD / A28

Top US general in Iraq considers troop cut by 2007

METRO / A25

Workers in Metro to receive P25 hike in basic pay

LIFESTYLE / C1



Shredded visions of the Pasig

GMA to ask Pope to visit Philippines

By Christine O. Avendaño and Christian V. Esguerra

POPE BENEDICT XVI IS LIKELY TO BE INVITED BY President Macapagal-Arroyo to visit the Philippines at their meeting scheduled for today at the Vatican.

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye told reporters that the President, who left for an eight-day visit to Europe yesterday, would invite the Pope to visit the

GMA TO ASK/ A8

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Monday, June 26, 2006 ★★ 8 sections / Vol. 21 / No. 198 P18 website: www.inq7.net

Iggy breaks protocol, keeps Gloria waiting

By Nikko Dizon

IKAW TALAGA!

WHAT'S WRONG WITH Rep. Ignacio "Iggy" Arroyo?

He nearly missed the special flight for the seven-day European trip of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

IGGY/ A8

Storm raises lahar risk

'Domeng' loosens Bulusan rocks, capsizes boat off N. Samar

By PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

HEAVY RAINS spawned by tropical storm "Domeng" dislodged rocks and boulders, some as big as tricycles, from the slopes of restive Mount Bulusan over the weekend, threatening three villages in Sorsogon.

Sorsogon is among the provinces experiencing heavy rains due to the storm, which is packing maximum winds of 90 kilometers per hour.

Domeng, the fourth tropical cyclone to enter the Philippines this year, passed over the Mindoro provinces last night and is expected to be 500 km west of Iba, Zambales, tonight.

"Metro Manila will not be directly affected, but it is within the circulation of Domeng, so there will be rains," Pagasa weather branch chief Nathaniel Cruz said.

Two people were missing yesterday after their motor boat capsized off Northern Samar, the Coast Guard said. Twelve other people survived by clinging to the boat.

The storm stranded some 3,000 passengers at ports in the Bicol provinces, Batangas, Mindoro and Northern Samar. Hundreds of Korean tourists were stranded on Bantayan Island in Cebu.

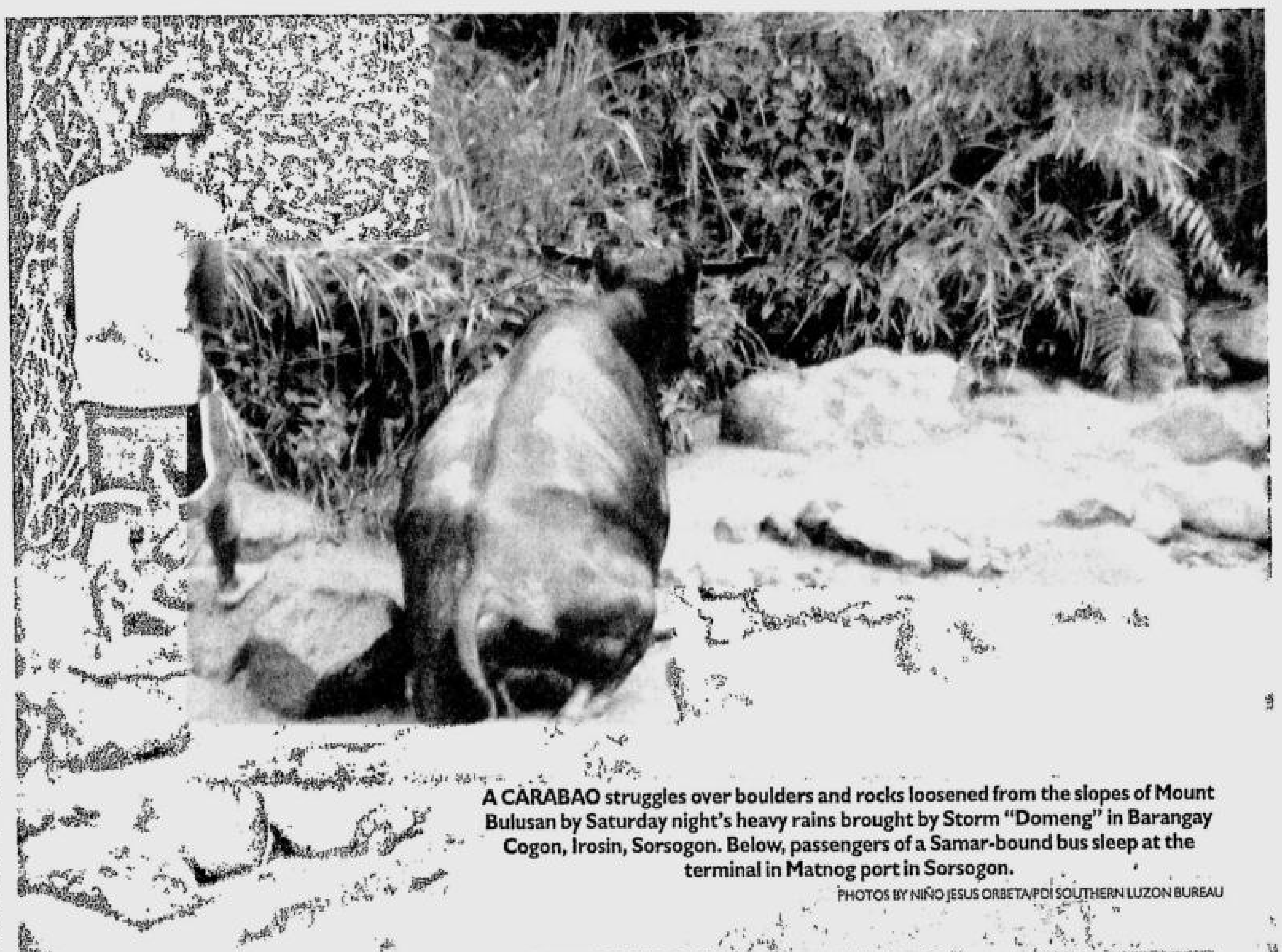
Just before she left for Europe, President Macapagal-Arroyo ordered the civil defense office to prepare contingency measures in case rains from the storm mixed with ash on the slopes of Bulusan to form deadly mudflows.

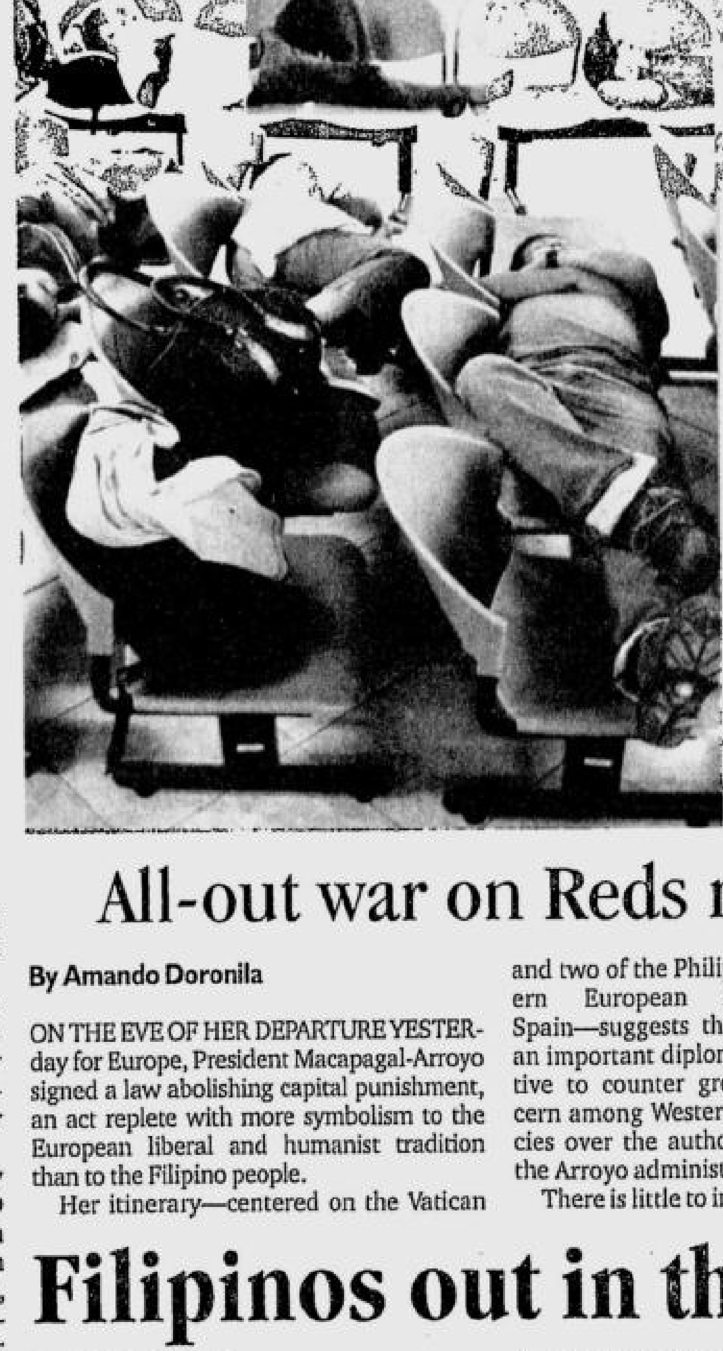
The 1,560-meter (5,149-foot) volcano has belched ash nine times since coming back to life in March. Bulusan is one of 22 active volcanoes in the Philippines, which lies on the Pacific Ocean's "Ring of Fire," where volcanic activity and earthquakes are common.

The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) on Sunday said it had detected four volcanic earthquakes in the past 24 hours. It reiterated that residents should stay at least 4 km away from the volcano.

Ms Arroyo said two C-130 car-

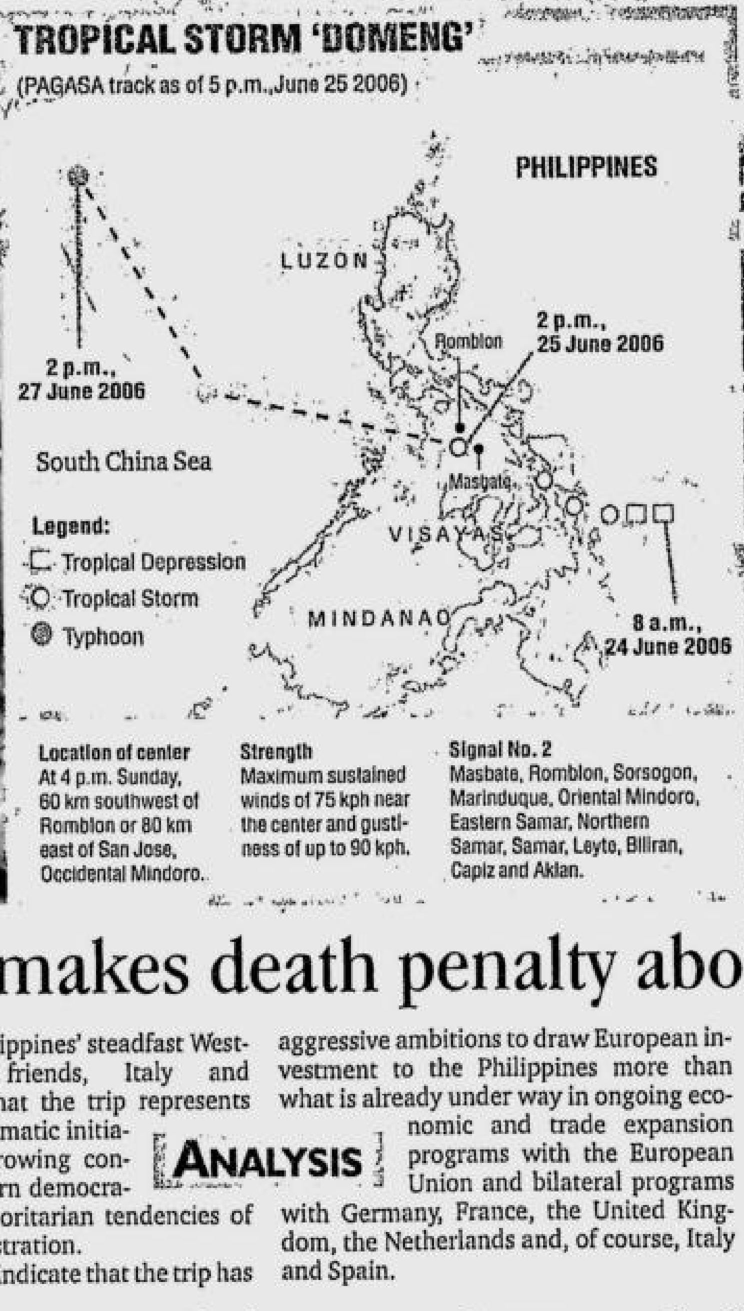
STORM/ A7





A CARABAO struggles over boulders and rocks loosened from the slopes of Mount Bulusan by Saturday night's heavy rains brought by Storm "Domeng" in Barangay Cogon, Irosin, Sorsogon. Below, passengers of a Samar-bound bus sleep at the terminal in Matnog port in Sorsogon.

PHOTOS BY NIÑO JESUS ORBETA/PDI SOUTHERN LUZON BUREAU


TROPICAL STORM 'DOMENG'
(PAGASA track as of 5 p.m., June 25 2006)
PHILIPPINES
LUZON
2 p.m., 25 June 2006
Romblon
2 p.m., 27 June 2006
South China Sea
Masbate
VISAYAS
MINDANAO
8 a.m., 24 June 2006
Legend:
Tropical Depression
Tropical Storm
Typhoon
Location of center
At 4 p.m. Sunday, 60 km southwest of Romblon or 80 km east of San Jose, Occidental Mindoro.
Strength
Maximum sustained winds of 75 kph near the center and gustiness of up to 90 kph.
Signal No. 2
Masbate, Romblon, Sorsogon, Marinduque, Oriental Mindoro, Eastern Samar, Northern Samar, Samar, Leyte, Biliran, Capiz and Aklan.

Lozano laughs off vigil for impeach

By Michael Lim Ubac

THE OLD MAN IS HAVING THE time of his life.

Yesterday, while concerned citizens were holding a prayer vigil in Congress so they would be first to file another impeachment complaint against President Macapagal-Arroyo, the 66-year-old Oliver Lozano was lazing on a Subic Bay beach.

The lawyer of the late strongman Ferdinand Marcos said he had no plans of stealing the show in Congress today. By constitutional fiat, only one suit can be brought in a year to unseat a president. Today marked the end of that one-year period.

Lozano laughed at news reports that said civilians, pursuing an attempt to unseat Ms Arroyo which the minority in the House of Representatives bungled last year, would employ a human chain to block him from refiling his previous impeachment complaint.

The effort is useless, said Lozano, pointing out that he could always use cyberspace to do his thing.

"Why go there when I can file by mail and e-mail?" said Lozano, reached by phone by the INQUIRER while leisurely spending a Sunday afternoon with his family and five grandchildren on the beach. In fact, he said, he had already revived his complaint.

On May 26, 2005, Lozano brought an impeachment complaint against Ms Arroyo, beating

LOZANO/ A13

RP priest reelected SVD head

By Minerva Generalao
PDI Research Head

"TRUSTING IN GOD'S GRACE and counting on your support and prayers, I accept."

With these words, Fr. Antonio M. Pernia accepted his reelection to a new six-year term as superior general of the Societas Verbi Divini (Society of the Divine Word or SVD) in Rome on June 23.

Out of the 140 votes cast by elected representatives of SVD provinces and chapters from around 70 countries, Pernia won on the first balloting with 116 votes, according to a cell phone text and e-mail sent to the INQUIRER by Fr. Randy Flores, SVD, from Rome.

Flores said the result of the balloting was a clear manifestation of the vote of confidence in the "sterling leadership" of Pernia, who received a standing ovation from his confreres upon his election as superior general.

Pernia, 57, was first elected SVD superior general in 2000,

RP PRIEST/ A23

All-out war on Reds makes death penalty abolition a sham

By Amando Doronila

ANALYSIS

ON THE EVE OF HER DEPARTURE YESTERday for Europe, President Macapagal-Arroyo signed a law abolishing capital punishment, an act replete with more symbolism to the European liberal and humanist tradition than to the Filipino people.

Her itinerary—centered on the Vatican and two of the Philippines' steadfast Western European friends, Italy and Spain—suggests that the trip represents an important diplomatic initiative to counter growing concern among Western democracies over the authoritarian tendencies of the Arroyo administration.

There is little to indicate that the trip has aggressive ambitions to draw European investment to the Philippines more than what is already under way in ongoing economic and trade expansion programs with the European Union and bilateral programs with Germany, France, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and, of course, Italy and Spain.

These programs are already covered by cooperation frameworks that don't need any further push from presidential visits.

The foremost beneficiary of this trip is the President herself.

Ms Arroyo has always been impressive in her visits. She is articulate and presents well-organized programs. Whether glow-

ALL-OUT/ A22

Filipinos out in the cold amid World Cup fever

By Ted S. Melendres
Sports Editor

NUREMBERG, GERMANY—THE UNIVERsal sporting fever gripping an estimated three-fourths of the world's population is halfway through its high-powered schedule—and the stunning results so far make the heart beat faster.

Sadly, though, the heat and excitement whipped up by the 2006 Fifa World Cup hardly infects the Filipino sports fan.

For a nation that looks to Manny Pacquiao and the grounded national basketball team as beacons of sporting glory, Philippine football is having a real bad time, according to critics of the Philippine Football Federation.

While hotels, plush malls and bistros in Metro Manila, Cebu, Bacolod and Davao cities show matches "live" on giant screens, the majority of the *masa* is completely unaware of the fever that has reached epidemic proportions from Andorra to Zimbabwe.

The overseas news wires are replete with stories that illustrate the passion—at times criminal, even murderous—that fans have for World Cup football, which happens only once every four years.

Two men in Bangkok argue over match results, then kill each other; couch potatoes in Buenos Aires are pulling their households apart; the Montenegrin Coast Guard arrests a bunch of Serbian fans trying to steal a small boat they planned to sail to the German coast …

Remember Andres Escobar, the Colombian defender whose goal against his own team allowed the host Americans to steal the match in the 1994 World Cup in the United States? The player flew home in shame, and was shot dead by an enraged

FILIPINOS/ A22

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Northern and Eastern Visayas will have stormy weather while Southern Luzon and the rest of Visayas will experience rains and gusty winds. Central Luzon including Mindanao will have cloudy skies with rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of Luzon will have partly cloudy to at times cloudy with isolated rainshowers.

COMPILED BY KATE V. PEDROSO, PDI RESEARCH/06/25/06 SOURCE PAGASA

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

Gonzalez denies gov't out to kill Joma

By Armand N. Nocum

JUSTICE SECRETARY RAUL Gonzalez has dismissed as improbable a claim by Communist Party of the Philippines founder Jose Ma. Sison that the government had sent assassins to the Netherlands to kill him, pointing out the government was doing a good job as it were isolating the communist chieftain.

Gonzalez also took exception to statements of leftist leaders describing the P1-billion fund the President had allocated for the anti-insurgency campaign as a "murder fund."

"Why will that consist of a murder fund if there is a war against the insurgency?" Gonzalez said Friday in an interview. "It's just like saying that all the Americans are murderers in Iraq, in Afghanistan."

He elaborated: "If legitimate combat operations happen, there will be no murderers. Even the Catholic Church accepts that."

In dismissing Sison's claim that Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita and National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales had sent mercenaries to liquidate the leftist leader in Utrecht where he lives in exile, the justice secretary said:

"That is not true. First, if we send mercenaries, we will be violating the sovereignty of other lands. That will put to no use all the diplomatic initiatives which are being done with the Dutch government, the Norwegians, the Swedes and the entire European community."

On the contrary, he said, it was Sison who sent out a "hit squad" to assassinate him, the President and other members of the Cabinet.

On Monday, Gonzalez said the government had been making headway in its effort to picture Sison as undesirable in the eyes of his host country, the Netherlands.

He said the criminal case the government was set to file against Sison for the killing of former CPP officials Romulo Kintanar and Arturo Tabara was primarily intended to get Sison kicked out of the country where he has been living in exile for 13 years.

"We are trying to convince the Netherlands to think that Sison is a criminal and they should not harbor criminals," he said.

Gonzalez drew attention to Manila's cancellation of Sison's passport, which made the situation of the CPP founder more untenable. "If the Dutch government expels him, what can he do in the face of his having no passport?"

Asked why the government was making the move only now, Gonzalez said that unlike before, the Philippine government had better access to the legal system of the Netherlands and other countries in Europe.

AFP beefs up anti-Red forces in Samar, Leyte

By Edra Benedicto
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—THE ARMED FORCES OF THE Philippines has deployed over 600 Army soldiers to Samar and Leyte to boost its existing personnel in the two provinces following the Arroyo administration's declaration of all-out war against communist insurgents.

The additional troops, including about 50 officers, would beef up the capabilities of the different brigades, battalions and reconnaissance companies operating on Samar island, the Army's 8th Infantry Division said in a statement Sunday.

The other week, a company of Scout Rangers and one reconnaissance company consisting of about 200 personnel arrived in Leyte to augment troops in the province, the statement said.

New People's Army rebels actively operated in Samar and Leyte where the poverty incidence is one of the highest in the country.

"We have to hit them hard and push them hard without let-up. Let us suffocate and finish them [off]," Maj. Gen. Bonifacio Ramos, commander of the 8th ID, said during the send-off ceremony for the officers and soldiers held Sunday at Camp Lukban here.

Ramos emphasized the need to relentlessly pursue the remaining NPA guerillas in Eastern Visayas, particularly in the remote villages of Samar island.

But he instructed the soldiers to protect the people and respect their rights as they pursue the counter insurgency operation.

But as if to taunt the government, communist rebels have been staging preemptive strikes on remote military detachments.

In Lupi, Camarines Sur, a band of NPA rebels attacked an Army detachment at dawn Sunday but were repulsed by government troops, the military said.

Army Maj. Jose Broso, the spokesperson of the military's Southern Luzon Command based in Camp Nakar in Lucena City, said communist rebels raided the camp of the 31st Infantry Battalion in Barangay Taysan in Lupi at around 1:30 a.m.

The firefight lasted about 45 minutes. No government soldier was killed, Broso said. The fleeing rebels sustained a number of casualties, he said.

On Saturday morning, some 40 NPA rebels ambushed newly trained Army soldiers escorted by two V150 armor tanks in Barangay Sta. Catalina in Atimonan, Quezon.

Broso said the soldiers led by Lt. Alcantara and 2Lt. Kunisala were traveling along the Maharlika Highway on their way to report to the 74th Infantry Battalion based in the Bondoc Peninsula and Lamon Bay area when they were fired upon by the rebels. No casualties were reported.

On Saturday, communist spokesperson Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal issued marching orders to NPA rebels to defeat the intensified counter insurgency operations.

The military is retraining and redeploying at least 3,000 troops as part of a two-year campaign to crush the communist insurgency as ordered by President Macapagal-Arroyo, who has earmarked P1 billion for the campaign.

But residents in the provinces are protesting the renewed militarization of the countryside.

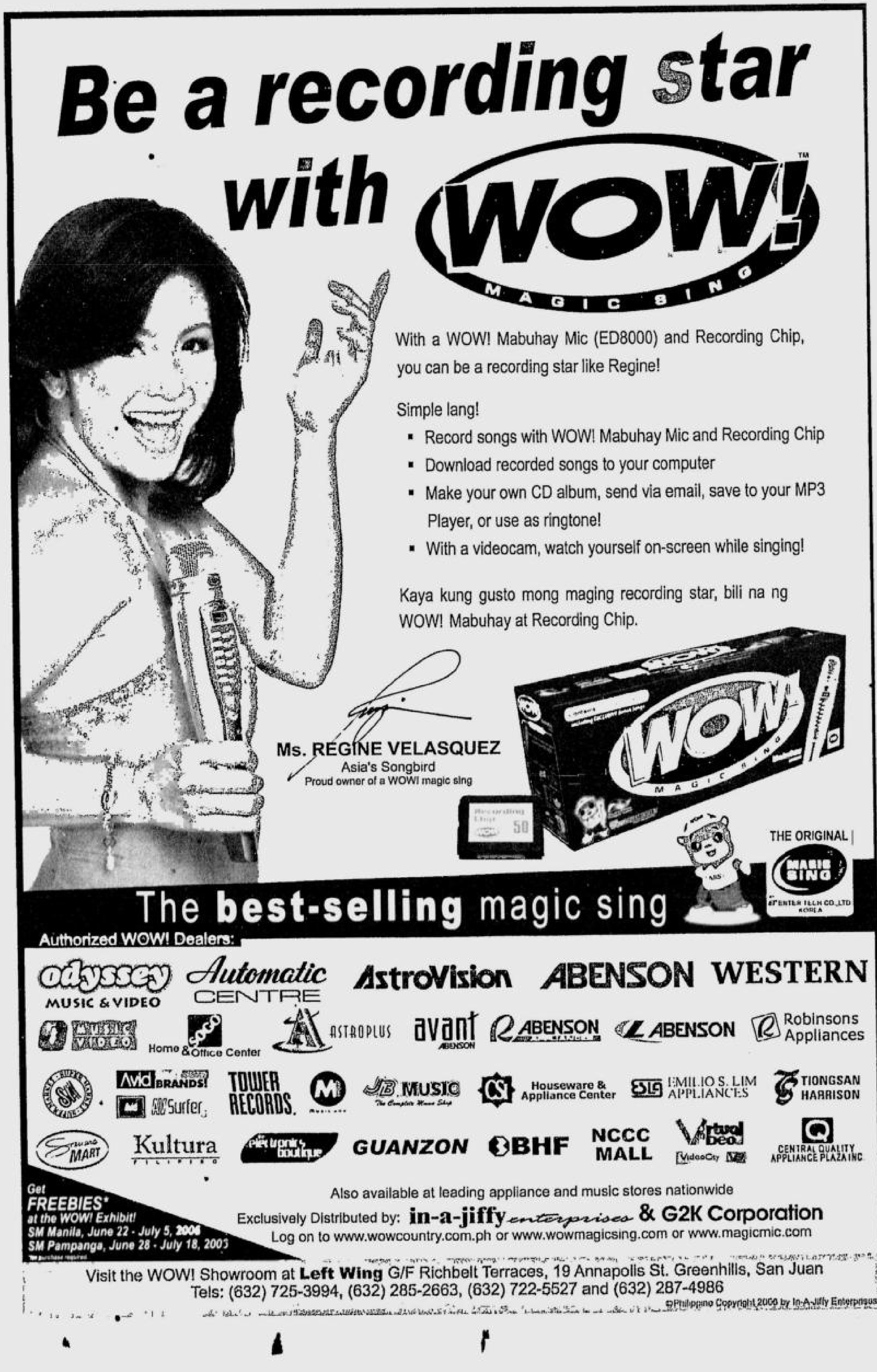
In Quezon province, various groups are protesting the blockade by Army soldiers of a peace caravan bound for the war-torn hinterland villages of Lopez, Guinayangan and Calauag towns.

"We light candles and offer religious songs and prayers calling for the respect of human rights and the end of military operations in Quezon province," said Oscar Lapida, media liaison officer of the peace caravan dubbed 'Journey for Peace and Justice."

The caravan left Manila on Tuesday for Lopez town to personally distribute relief goods to villagers affected by the ongoing counter-insurgency operations. But on Thursday, Army soldiers blocked the caravan.

Lt. Gen. Pedro Cabuay Jr., head of the military's Southern Luzon Command, said he would allow the caravan to get only up to Gumaca town.

He said his men were still conducting combat operations in the area. "I don't want to jeopardize their safety if I will allow them to reach the area. It's for their own good," the Solcom chief said. *With a report from Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*



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RP marks int'l day against drug abuse

THE DANGEROUS DRUGS Board (DDB) in collaboration with the Inter-Agency Committee on Drug Abuse Prevention Education will lead today's annual commemoration of "International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking (Idadait)" at the DDB-PDEA compound in Diliman, Quezon City.

Daycare pupils aged four and above, teachers, parents and barangay officials in the immediate vicinity of the DDB-PDEA compound are expected to participate in the program.

Organizers said that tremendous efforts should be extended to increase awareness of the destructive effects of illegal drugs and society's responsibility to care for the well-being of its children.

These will be given focus in today's assembly, which has for its theme "Drugs are not Child's Play," with its Filipino adaptation "Ang Batang Pinoy Laban Sa Droga."

The national annual observance of Idadait is in pursuance to Presidential Proclamation No. 264 and is being observed simultaneously in all member-countries of the United Nations, as provided for in the resolution signed by UN General Assembly on Dec. 7, 1987.

Undersecretary Edgar C. Galvante, executive director of the Dangerous Drugs Board, expressed his enthusiasm over the holding of today's affair, saying this would be an opportune time to urge adults to protect the children.

"Parents, siblings and other family members can ensure that a child's home is a safe environment and that children are aware of the dangers associated with drug abuse. Teachers and social workers also have a role to play by watching out for warning signals and taking measures to address any drug-related problems," he said.

Galvante noted that teachers should provide kids with information on the health risks linked to drug abuse and should also provide them a forum to discuss the issue openly.

Other individuals and organizations can and should also contribute to the protection of children. The media, nongovernmental organizations and government institutions are among them, he said.

Secretary Anselmo S. Avenido Jr., chair of the Dangerous Drugs Board, is expected to give the inspirational talk during the program.

Fuel prices hiked yet again

GASOLINE AND KEROSENE prices again went up by 50 centavos a liter, following another round of price hikes by local oil firms.

As in the past few weeks, the oil companies spared the socially sensitive diesel from the price increases.

First to raise prices were oil refiners Petron Corp. and Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp. at 6 a.m. yesterday, followed by Chevron Philippines Inc. (Caltex stations) at noon the same day.

New players Flying V and Unioil Petroleum Philippines Inc. are scheduled to hike prices at 12:01 a.m. and 6 a.m. today, respectively.

Eastern Petroleum Corp. will follow suit at 12:01 a.m. tomorrow.

According to data from the Department of Energy, the regional benchmark Dubai crude had softened to an average of $64.89 a barrel as of June 22, from $65 a barrel in May.

The price of unleaded gasoline based on the Mean of Platts Singapore (MOPS) benchmark for refined petroleum products dropped to a June 1 to 22 average of $82.73 a barrel from the May average of $86.80 a barrel.

MOPS-based diesel, however, soared to an average of $88.11 in the first 22 days of June from $87.53 a barrel last month.

Despite the surge in international diesel prices, local pump prices were again spared from this round of price hikes due to the 1-percentage-point reduction in import tariffs for crude and refined petroleum products.

Since the start of the year, oil firms have raised gasoline prices 15 times by a total of P7.50 a liter. Diesel prices have risen 12 times by a total of P6 a liter, while kerosene prices have increased 16 times by a total of P8 a liter.

Abigail L. Ho

Europe lauds abolition of death penalty

STRASBOURG—THE COUNCIL of Europe welcomed on Saturday the abolition of the death penalty in the Philippines, signed into law by President Macapagal-Arroyo earlier in the day.

"I warmly welcome President Arroyo's signing of a law abolishing the death penalty in the Philippines," said Rene van der Linden, president of the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly (PACE).

"The 46 nations of the Council of Europe have been a de facto death penalty-free zone since 1997 and we are happy that an ever-growing circle of civilized nations feel the same way on this fundamental human rights issue," Van der Linden said.

The law abolishing capital punishment automatically commuted the sentences of about 1,200 death row inmates in the New Bilibid Prisons in Muntinlupa City to life imprisonment.

PACE has had long-standing links with the Philippine Congress and is assisting with the proposal to set up an Asian Parliamentary Assembly.

Next week, during its plenary session in Strasbourg, PACE will debate a report on Council of Europe member and observer states, including the United States and Japan, which have not abolished the death penalty. *AFP*

ST. LUKE'S INTERNATIONAL EYE INSTITUTE

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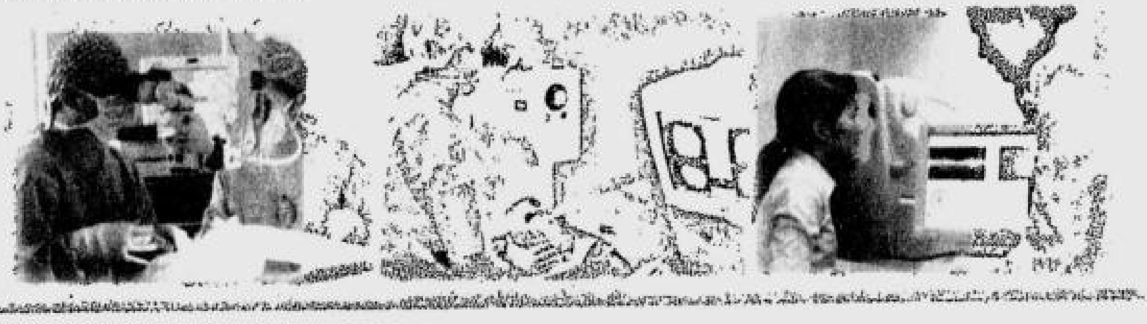
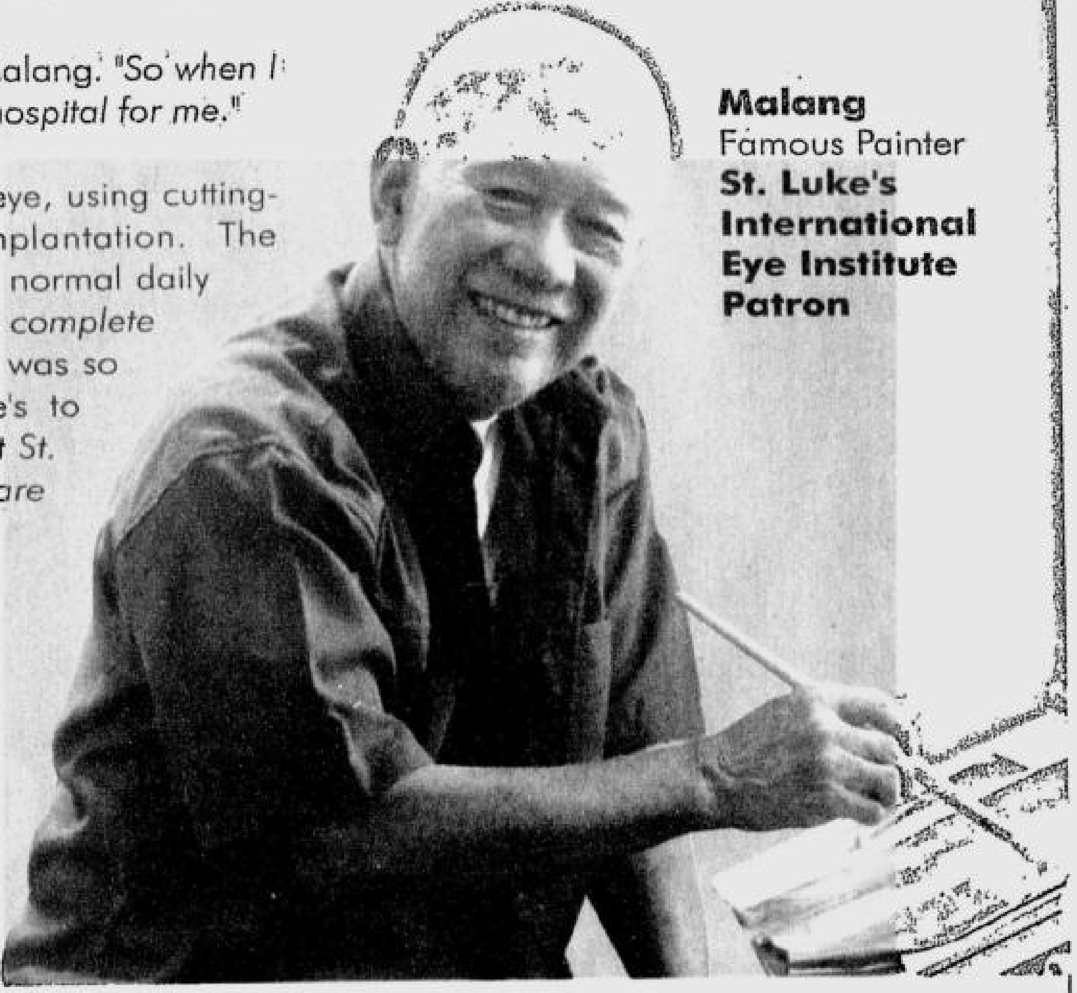
"As a painter, I need my eyesight to be at its best," says renowned painter Malang. *"So when I experienced vision problems, I immediately went to St. Luke's. It is the only hospital for me."*

St. Luke's eye doctors performed outpatient cataract surgery on Malang's eye, using cutting-edge phacoemulsification with state-of-the-art intraocular lens implantation. The ultramodern procedure restored his vision and enabled him to resume his normal daily activities. *"The medical staff is highly competent and compassionate. I have complete trust and confidence in my doctors."*, Malang affirms. The renowned artist was so impressed with the results of the surgery that he returned to St. Luke's to undergo the same procedure for his other eye. *"I feel at home when I'm at St. Luke's. All my children and grandchildren go to St. Luke's for their healthcare needs."*

"Now, I can paint even without my eyeglasses," says Malang. *"St. Luke's is the best!"*





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St. Luke's International Eye Institute offers the most comprehensive range of eye care facilities and services in the country, including two outstanding facilities for customized laser vision correction and specialized vision rehabilitation. In year 2000, the Institute performed the Philippines's first tear duct laser surgery. It is the only facility in the country where the procedure is done regularly. Recently, the country's first conjunctival stem cell transplant was also done at the Institute-one of the many pioneering medical procedures at St. Luke's.

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The St. Luke's International Eye Institute is staffed by experts extensively trained in the latest ophthalmological and microsurgical procedures. Their expertise covers all eye care subspecialties. Using the most modern instruments and apparatus, they deliver superior eye care and novel treatments for a wide range of conditions in patients of all ages. The Institute is the first and only such facility in the country that maintains a comprehensive and multi-linked Cataract Databank for all its cataract surgeons to continuously enhance the safety and accuracy of cataract surgery outcomes. Many patients from abroad seek treatment at the Institute because of its unparalleled superiority in expertise and equipment.

St. Luke's International Eye Institute is better staffed and better equipped than any other eye institution in the Philippines, old or new. www.stluke.com.ph

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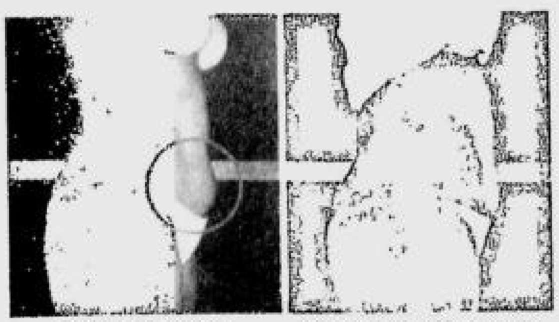
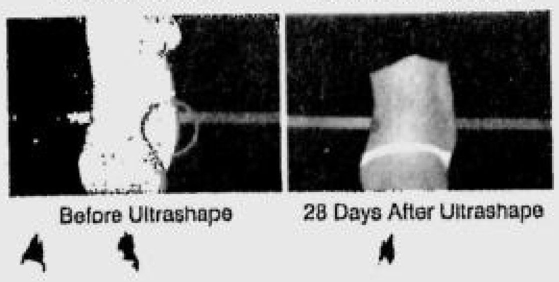
ULTRASHAPE
LIPO Without The Suction

Marie France brings to Manila the 1st Non-invasive breakthrough in Body Contouring

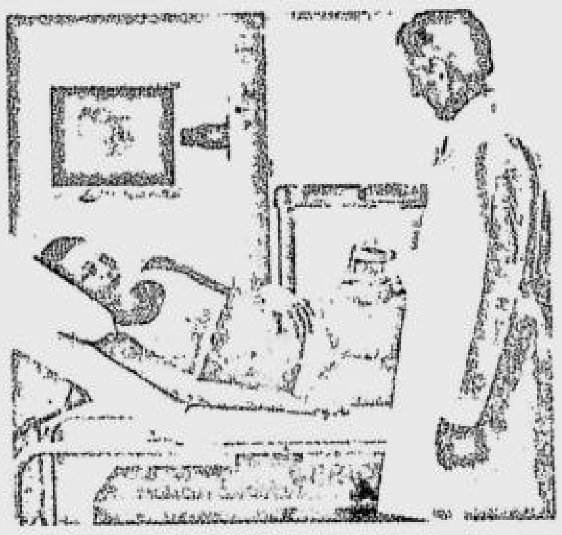
PLASTIC surgeons have invented a machine that can 'melt away' body fat in a patient's lunchbreak – ULTRASHAPE. This treatment gets rid of unwanted bulges and unlike liposuction does not require surgery. FAST, EFFECTIVE and SAFE, it's the most advanced method of body contouring to date.



Before Ultrashape 14 Days After Ultrashape



Before Ultrashape 28 Days After Ultrashape



Ultrashape was founded 5 years ago in Delaware, USA by Ami Glicksman M.D., formerly a senior plastic surgeon and Yoram Eshel, PhD, MBA, a leading expert in medical physics with 15 years experience in high-power ultrasound technology. Together they set out to pioneer non-invasive body contouring. When they started Ultrashape, it was well known that ultrasound waves were able to break down and destroy fat cells, releasing the fat contained within them. Some forms of liposuction had already started experimenting with ultrasound probes to liquefy fats and make it easier to suck them out. Glicksman and Eshel built on that to come up with a unique concept of Ultrashape.

Using a focused ultrasound beam, Ultrashape destroys fat cells effectively in the stomach, thighs (saddlebags), lovehandles and buttocks. It works by focusing high frequency ultrasound waves from outside the body to targeted areas. These ultrasonic waves break down fat cells without damaging blood vessels or other tissues such as skin, muscle, bone and nerves. From there, the broken down cells are absorbed into the patient's white blood cells and are then eliminated from the body through natural processes.

According to Dr. Eshel, "The inherent safety of our method lies in the fact that we only do half the traditional job compared to liposuction and let nature do the rest." Physiological clearance of the fat tissue occurs over a period of 3 weeks following the procedure, similar to the way the body clears out damaged tissue found in a bruise.

Normally about 4 sessions are recommended to fully achieve one's ideal figure. Women and men who have tried it are excited about the fact that immediate results were seen already after just a single session.

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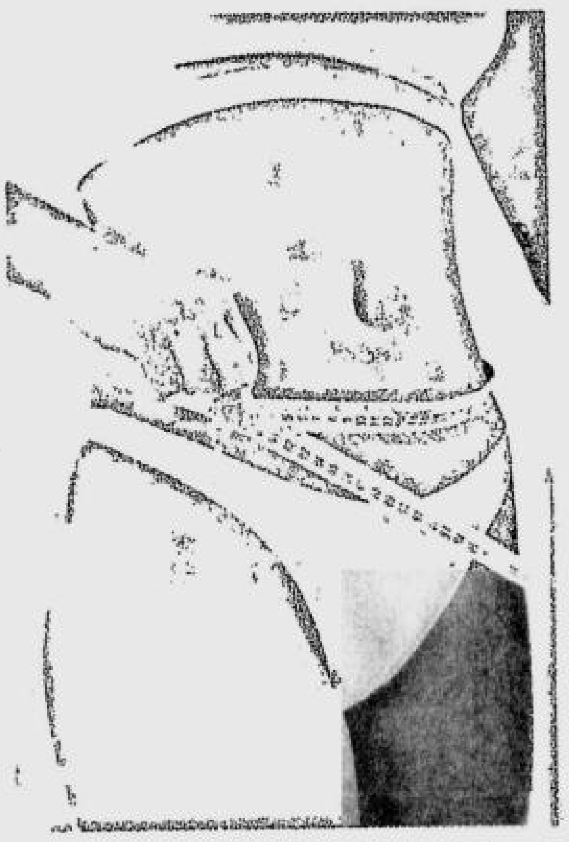

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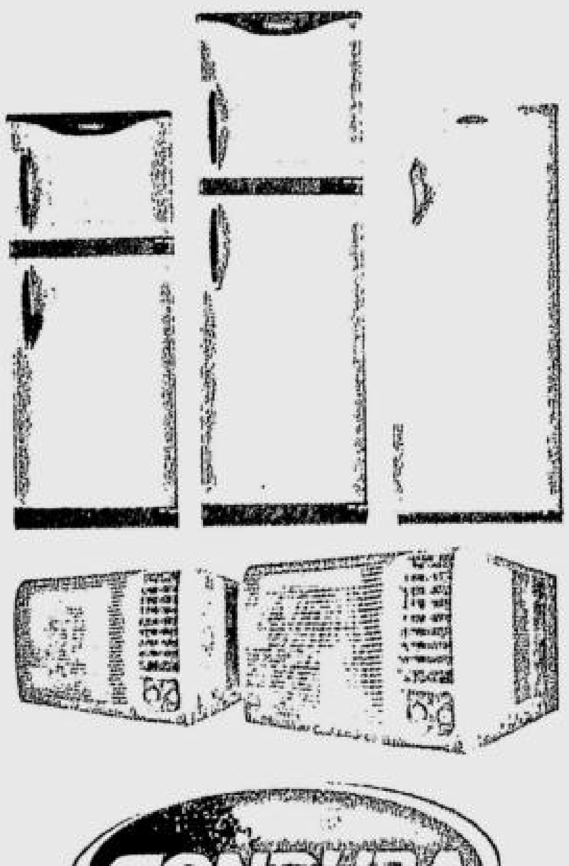

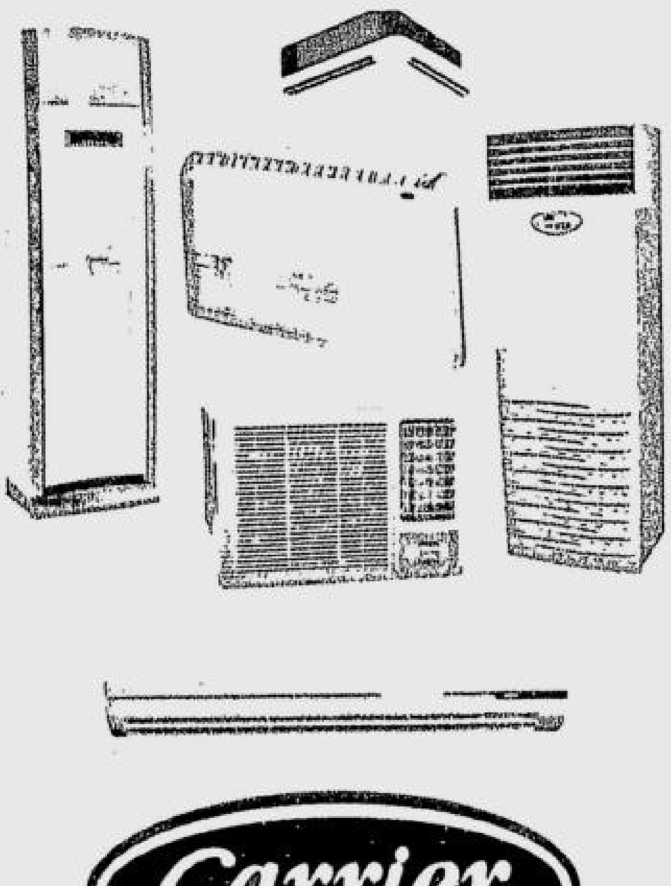

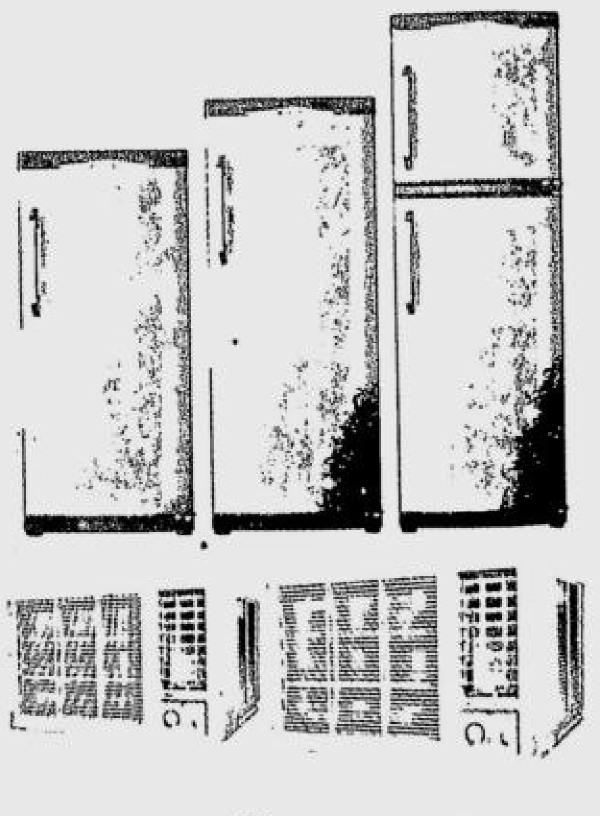

CONDURA Carrier Kelvinator

Hunt is on for Boracay slay suspect

By Luige A. del Puerto

POLICE HAVE IDENTIFIED THE SUSPECT in the killing of a resort owner on Boracay island last week.

Philippine National Police Director General Arturo Lomibao instructed the regional police force to track down Jesus Palbaquer, 26, of Sagay, Negros Occidental.

Lomibao flew to the island-resort over the weekend to personally assess the progress of the investigation into the murder of Aracelli Villanueva-Hug last Tuesday.

Drinking habits

He assured the victim's husband, Paul, and the couple's two children of swift police action, the PNP said in a statement.

The Boracay police tagged Palbaquer as the primary suspect in the killing of Hug inside the Bamboo Beach Resort which she owned in Barangay Manoc-Manoc at the southern end of the island-resort.

Boracay police chief Supt. Jess Mendez said the victim had employed Palbaquer as a cook at the resort.

"He was fired because of his alleged drinking habits," said Mendez.

Paid back

The suspect was reportedly seen in Boracay two days before the incident. He had rented a room and even borrowed money from some acquaintances on the island. Other witnesses also confirmed the suspect's presence a day before the killing, police said.

Quoting witnesses, the police said Palbaquer packed his things and left the island on June 20, or several hours after the crime was discovered.

He had paid back the money that he had borrowed in wads of P1,000, police said.

Hug was found dead at around 10 a.m. on Tuesday in her room at the Bamboo Beach Resort.

Police recovered the knife supposedly used on her.

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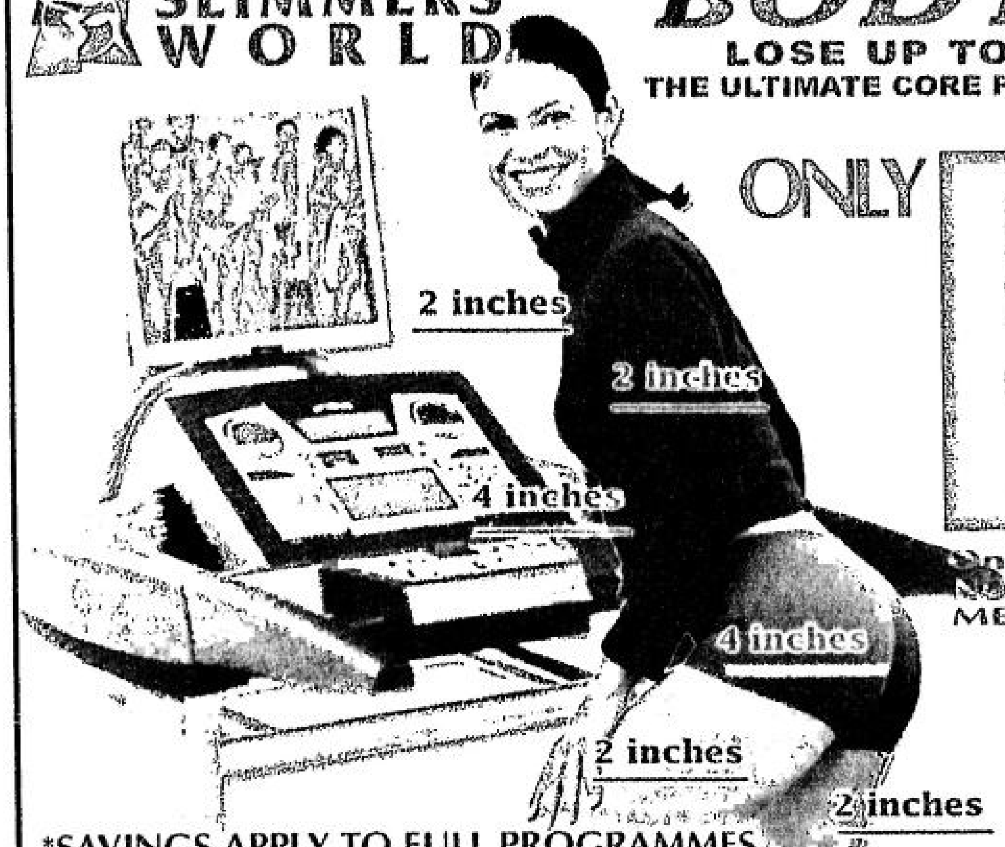

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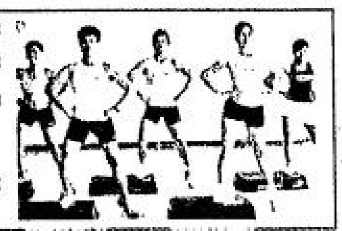

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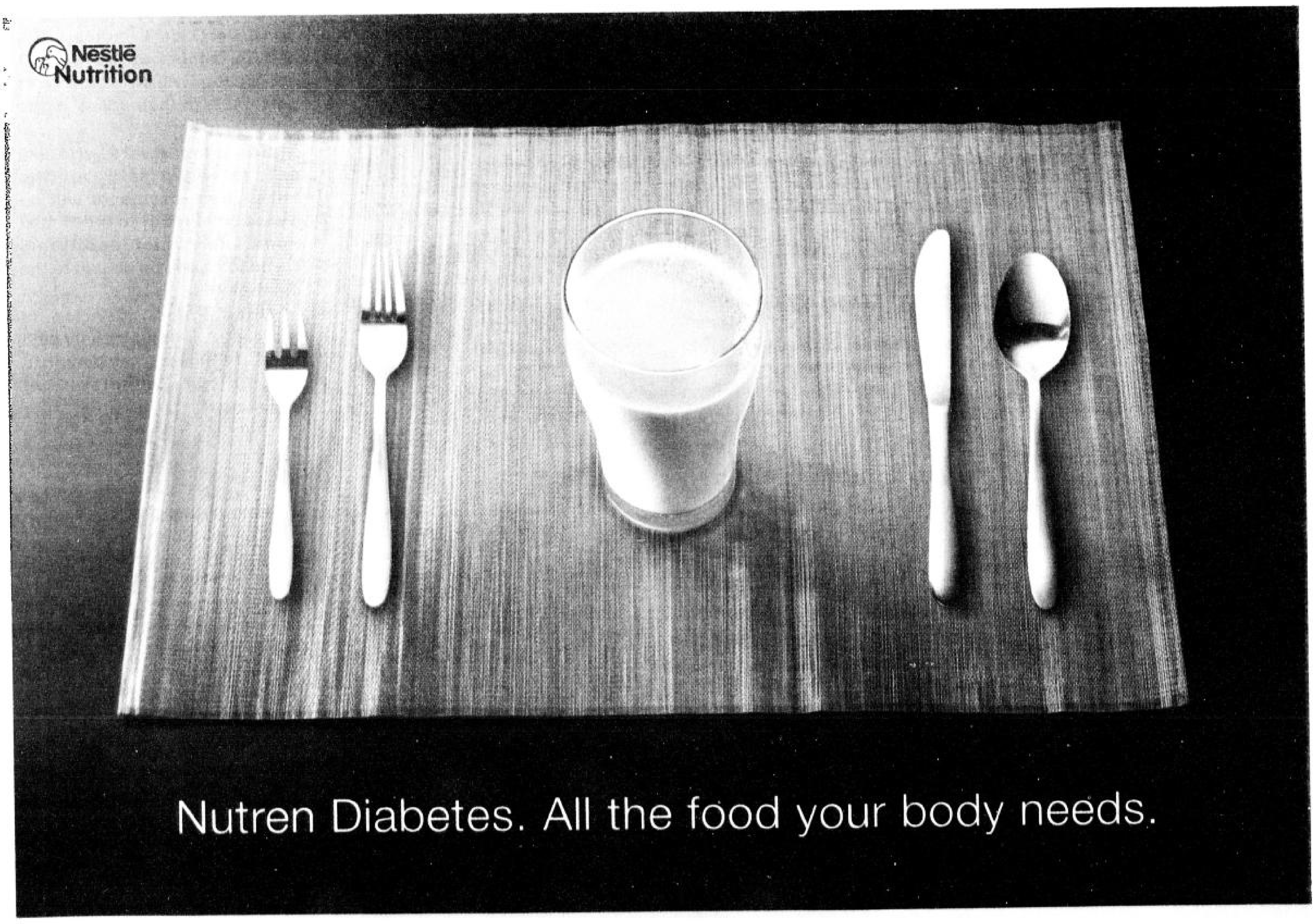

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PETPLANS shifting from Pre-Need to Financial Products Marketing

PETPLANS Inc., one of the country's leading Pre-Need Companies, will be moving forward from the pre-need industry to the marketing of various financial products.

To do this, the Company will get proper approval to convert its planholders' certificates into shares of a professionally and independently managed Mutual Fund.

Lorenzo T. Ocampo, PETPLANS President & CEO, said this move forward "is the best alternative we can take to protect the interests of our planholders. We are leaving the pre-need industry, while the trust fund is liquid and intact, because the pre-need framework is no longer conducive to selling or owning pre-need plans.

"The changes of SEC rules, done without consultation in the middle of the game, and the continuing rapid decline of the market no longer allow us to assure peace of mind to our planholders, which is the whole point of the pre-need business," he said.

PETPLANS will be shifting its business into what it calls business hubs—the Network Hub which will sell life, non-life, HMO, and memorial park lots; the OFW Hub will provide remittances or money transfer, and document and parcel delivery services; and the Financial Hub will provide loans and credit card facilities.

To satisfy legal requirements that will pave the way for this conversion plan, PETPLANS filed a petition for rehabilitation with the Makati Regional Trial Court. The Company is seeking the court's permission to convert all outstanding pre-need plans and contracts into a professionally managed mutual fund.

Sales Leaders Remain Committed to Serve. The 12th National Sales Convention-Manila held on May 25-26, 2006 at Hotel Dusit Nikko honored the Sales Leaders whose commitment to PETPLANS and the planholders bore fruit for all. From top left, clockwise: President Larry T. Ocampo with **Florence Cruz**, Caloocan; **Aniana Briones**, Cagayan de Oro; **Angeles Jawod**, Gen. Santos; Board Director **Enrique Herbosa**; **Adelfa Banal**, Angeles City; Chairman of the Board **Fr. Ed Martinez**; **Cecilia Duguman**, Catbalogan; and First Vice President **Dong de Guzman**.

PETPLANS will continue in operation but will have a new name, PETLink Financial Corporation. Since it will no longer be subject to the uncertainties and restrictions of the pre-need industry, the Company is optimistic that the converted plans will generate reasonable returns for the planholders.

While the approval of the conversion petition is pending, PETPLANS willl continue to pay the scheduled education, pension and memorial benefits due to planholders.

THE MECHANICS OF CONVERSION

Upon the conversion's approval by the court, planholders will exchange their pre-need plans, contracts and insurance certificates for a Fund Certificate indicating a certain number of shares with a corresponding value proportionate to their share in the Fund.

For planholders who are not yet fully paid, all the subsequent payments will be deposited directly to the Mutual Fund, for which additional certificates will be issued to the planholders.

Once the conversion is completed, holders of fully paid Fund certificates may decide to hold on to or withdraw their investment.

Consistently doing the right thing

PETPLANS *was the first to stop selling traditional, open-ended educational plans in 1992 – at great financial sacrifice – because it was the right thing to do.*

This decision proved to be correct, with tuition fees increasing by 12 times over the last five-year period from 2000 to 2005. The SEC banned the sale of such open-ended plans only in 2002.

PETPLANS *has also offered a Buy-Back program to its open-ended planholders that paid off their original investments plus returns that are higher-than-bank interest rates.*

To date, less than 2,000 of some 4,000 open-ended plans have not been bought back. The program resulted in some P82 million savings for the company.

PETPLANS recently decided to voluntarily impose a moratorium on the sale of new plans as it has become clear that current regulations will not provide peace of mind for planholders.

Advantages of Mutual Fund Cited

A mutual fund is a fund operated by an investment company or placed under investment management of a bank or financial entity which raises money from shareholders and invests it in stocks, bonds, options, commodities, or money market securities.

While the law does not allow mutual funds to guarantee a return, they may provide reasonable returns on planholders' investments.

These funds offer investors the advantages of diversification and professional management.

The management of the fund by a very large, experienced and reputable institution, which can easily be accessed by planholders will help reassure them that their investments are intact and being taken care of.

"Once outside the pre-need industry's restricted investment guidelines," Ocampo said, "the trust fund can take advantage of broader investment parameters that allow for better risk management, more realistic asset-liability matches, and higher returns."

We are in the business of selling "peace of mind."

The present environment does not allow that.

A mutual fund is the best alternative to pre-need plans.

Doing things right

A track record of excellence

PETPLANS ***has proven its Financial Strength, Commitment to Customer Interests, and Management Excellence.***

- Total Trust Fund Assets of P2.7 billion, of which P1.2 billion or 44% is in cash or cash-equivalent investments. With this alone, the Company has enough liquidity to cover plan availments over the next 5 years.
- Over P150 million in cash or cash equivalent investments and over P60 million in real property assets in its corporate coffers.
- At its peak, was growing at a clip of 25% per annum, with more than 130 branches nationwide, 500 employees and 12,000 sales agents serving some 140,000 planholders.
- Rose to become the 4th largest company in just one year after its organization; thereafter maintaining its position as one among the 10 leading industry players.
- Most comprehensively ISO-certified pre-need company, proving its world-class customer-first services and processes.
- Cited as the "Most Outstanding Pre-Need Company" by 4 independent groups last year.
- Total Assets of over P3 billion

The Board of Directors *(left to right)*: the late Adrian V. Ocampo, Founder, Former Chairman and CEO; Fr. Edmundo M. Martinez S.J., Chairman; Eduardo D. de los Angeles, Director; Millette T. Ocampo, Director; Lorenzo T. Ocampo, Director/President & CEO; Wilfrido E. Sanchez, Director; Erlinda M. Henson, Director/CFO; Former Sen. Wigberto E. Tañada, Director; Hon. Jose C. Ibazeta, Director; Enrique M. Herbosa, Treasurer; and Gretchen O. Recto, Director (not in photo).

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Storm raises lahar risk

From page A1

go planes, eight helicopters, including the presidential helicopter, and a train were ready to travel to Bicol to help people who might be displaced by any mudflows or volcanic eruption.

Some 90 people fled Barangay Cogon in Irosin after hearing boulders and rocks rumbling down Bulusan on Saturday night, an official said yesterday.

Although the volcano was quiet yesterday, the stormy weather could trigger life-threatening volcanic mudflows, Phivolcs said in a statement.

Phivolcs chief Renato Solidum Jr. said new ash deposits would make the water flow denser, which would in turn give the flows more capacity to erode old but loose materials.

Bart Bautista, Phivolcs deputy director, ruled out the possibility of a magma-driven eruption taking place in the next few days.

Steam explosions

Bautista said the rains brought by Domeng would at the least generate "steam explosions."

"It's possible that the rains could recharge the water saturated zone and this can form steam ... (and cause) smaller steam explosions," he said. The explosions, he said, would be confined to the summit of the volcano.

Irosin Mayor Lilia Gonzales said she had warned residents in villages under threat of mudflows and rock slides to evacuate to temporary shelters because of the storm.

"I told them that in an ash explosion they can just cover their faces with towels but in a sudden mudflow, they'll be the ones to be covered alive," she said.

The boulders, piled about two meters high in a gully, broke the pipe supplying water to households in Cogon.

Volcanic debris accumulating in the gully could trigger landslides that could affect a wide swath down the center of the village, said Romeo Cielo, assistant engineer of the Sorsogon Second District Engineering Office.

Two villages in Juban town also have gullies passing through them where volcanic debris pose a danger if the rains continue to pour.

Phivolcs has yet to determine the volume and type of volcanic debris deposited on the slopes of Bulusan.

Levee

Cielo said engineers had to deal with mud that flowed down the mountain on June 20 through the gully on which they built a levee to divert the cascading volcanic debris away from the residential areas of Cogon.

He said he could not yet determine the most effective way to deal with the volcanic debris deposited on the slopes of Bulusan.

"We have no idea what to expect next," Cielo said.

Ernesto Corpuz, chief science research specialist, noted that the debris that flowed from the volcano on Saturday was very sticky.

Yesterday morning, Sorsogon Gov. Raul Lee ordered the deployment of backhoes and additional equipment to clear the gully in Cogon to prevent the volcanic debris from spilling over to residential areas.

Eighty-nine people were brought to the evacuation centers in Irosin on Saturday night after the Cogon River swelled due to heavy mudflows, according to Mayor Gonzales.

The additional evacuees from Cogon were housed at the Gallanosa National High School, bringing to 510 people the total number of evacuees in Irosin.

2 missing

The storm may have claimed its first casualties when a motorized boat capsized off Northern Samar.

The MB Blyt was carrying 16 people and construction materials from Sorsogon to nearby Northern Samar on Saturday when it was buffeted by winds and waves and overturned, a Coast Guard statement said.

Fourteen people, some of them children, clung to the capsized boat until it drifted near Samar's Capul island early Sunday and villagers rescued the passengers, the statement said.

It said two other people were missing and a search and rescue mission was under way.

Coast Guard officials said they were investigating the incident to determine if the Blyt had permission to leave Sorsogon's port town of Matnog on Saturday.

Stranded

The Coast Guard temporarily prohibited several small ferries from leaving Sorsogon and nearby Albay beginning Saturday due to the storm, stranding passengers.

A total of 1,932 passengers was stranded at various Bicol ports while 700 were stranded at ports in Batangas and Calapan cities.

The Office of Civil Defense in Bicol said 302 passengers were stranded in Tabaco City; 37 in Virac, Catanduanes; 200 in Pilar, eight in Bulan and 1,362 in Matnog—all in Sorsogon, and 23 in Bapor, Masbate.

At the Tabaco port, more than 100 stranded passengers were given free meals courtesy of the Catanduanes provincial government.

At the Matnog port, the Coast Guard there said 47 buses, 26 trucks and 45 small vehicles and cars were stranded.

Lt. Commander Darryl Vargas said about 600 passengers of 40 buses and cargo trucks were prevented from leaving the Batangas port.

At past noon, some of them decided to go home, Vargas said. He said around 130 people were stuck in Calapan.

Domeng was expected to be 30 km north of San Jose, Occidental Mindoro, this morning.

Storm Signal No. 1, with winds of 30-60 kph, has been hoisted over Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Lubang Island, Occidental Mindoro, southern Quezon, the Camarines provinces, Albay, Catanduanes, Southern Leyte, northern Cebu, northern Negros, Iloilo, Guimaras, Antique, Cuyo Island, the Calamian group, Dinagat Island and Siargao Island.

Under Storm Signal No. 2, with winds of 60-100 kph, are Masbate, Romblon, Sorsogon, Burias Island, Marinduque, Oriental Mindoro, Eastern Samar, Northern Samar, Samar, northern Leyte, Biliran Island, Capiz, Aklan and Bantayan Island. *Reports from Ephraim Aguilar, Juan Escandor Jr., Job Belen, Bobby Labalan and Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau; Joey A. Gabieta and Jhunnex Napallacan, PDI Visayas Bureau; and Chrisitne Avendaño and Blanche S. Rivera in Manila and AP*

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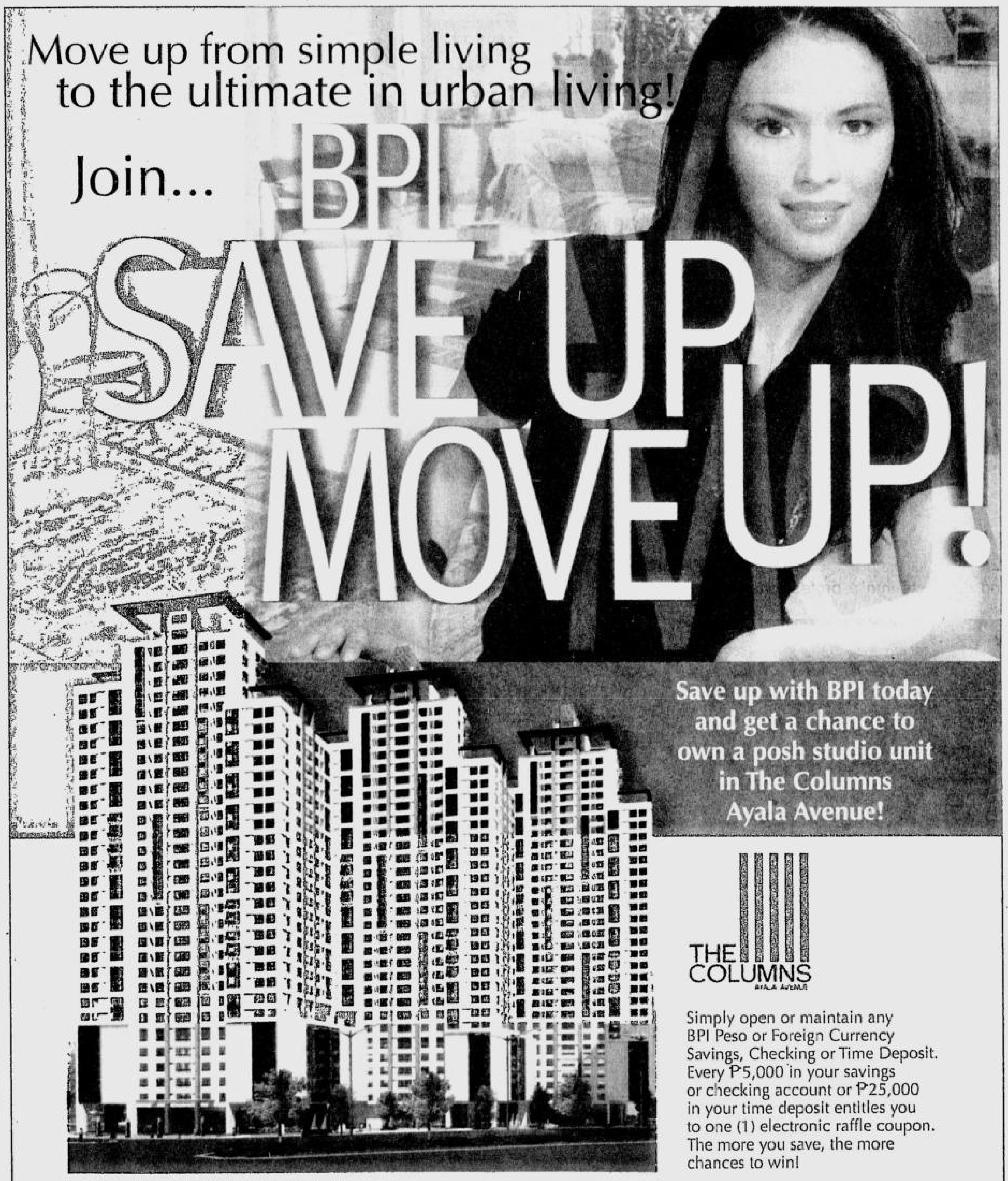
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GMA to ask Pope to visit Philippines

From page A1

Philippines, which just abolished the death penalty.

Ms Arroyo on Saturday signed a law abolishing the death penalty after Congress granted her wish to finally put a stop to the execution of death convicts.

"I am sure the President will convey the invitation of the Filipino people to the Pope, considering that the Philippines is the third largest Catholic country in the world and the largest in Asia," said Bunye, who was part of Ms Arroyo's delegation.

The President said the "theme" of her European trip had to do with "life, unity and prosperity."

Shaking hands with her officials as she made her way to a chartered Philippine Airlines flight, Ms Arroyo, in a dark grey suit, looked quite well after suffering a viral infection that sent her on a two-day hospital stay and forced her to delay her European trip for a day.

Private audience

Ms Arroyo will meet with Italian officials and Spanish royalty, but the highlight of her trip will be her private audience with Pope Benedict XVI at the Apostolic Palace at the Vatican.

"For the first time, I will meet with Pope Benedict XVI in the Vatican and will tell him our people's devotion and support for his papacy," the President said in her departure speech at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Centennial Terminal.

A senior Roman Catholic bishop, however, said Ms Arroyo should keep the Pope out of Philippine politics.

Archbishop Oscar Cruz said Ms Arroyo, still saddled by questions of legitimacy of her electoral victory in 2004, should not do to Benedict what she had done with the late Pope John Paul II.

Minuses

Cruz recalled Ms Arroyo had claimed that her decision to run in 2004 had the blessing of John Paul II, the Pope whose heart was arguably closest to Filipinos.

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo waves before boarding her plane at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport for an eight-day visit to Europe. With her is Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita. AFP

Cruz doubted if Ms Arroyo would receive any "moral affirmation" from Benedict regarding her troubled administration.

"It won't make any difference, this desperate claim for moral affirmation," he told the INQUIRER. "There are just too many social minuses here in the Philippines compared with the plus of her decision to abolish the death penalty law."

Benedict, formerly the top watchdog of Catholic doctrine, is known for his caution against wading into the waters of secular politics—at least too frequently.

Cruz, a member of the permanent council on the Synod of Bishops for Asia, said Ms Arroyo's decision against capital punishment also appeared to smack of political motives.

He noted that Ms Arroyo signed the bill into law on the eve of her departure for Spain and Italy.

Contradiction

Cruz pointed out a contradiction in Ms Arroyo's decision to abolish capital punishment while purportedly not doing anything to stop the killing and kidnapping of more than 600 activists, including church people.

"When I meet the Holy Father soon in the Vatican, I shall tell him that we have acted in the name of life for a world of peace and harmony," Ms Arroyo said.

After her private audience with the Pope, Ms Arroyo will meet with Secretary of State Cardinal Angelo Sudano and then will have a chance to visit the Basilica crypt of Pope John Paul II, who died on April 2 last year.

The President said her trip to Rome would also see her meeting with Italian President Giorgio Napolitano at the Quirinale and Italian Prime Minister Romano Prodi at the Palazzo Chigi.

"We will further strengthen our trade, investments, tourism and culture programs with Italy," she said.

Meeting with King of Spain

On Thursday, the President and her party will head to Madrid, Spain, where she will meet with King Juan Carlos and Prime Minister Jose Rodrigues Zapatero.

"Filipinos are thanking Spain because she is their closest ally and supporter in Europe," Ms Arroyo said.

The President also said she would talk with government officials of Spain and Italy to spread the word about how efficient and capable overseas Filipino workers are.

In her visit to Madrid beginning on June 29, Ms Arroyo will drop by the Congreso de los Deputados and the Ayuntamiento de Madrid.

Filipino community

On June 30, the President will have lunch with King Carlos and Queen Sofia.

She will also have a chance to meet with the Filipino community and attend a Filipino-Hispano Friendship Day reception.

Ms Arroyo and her party are expected to return home on July 2.

Iggy breaks . . .

From page A1

The 55-year-old Negros Occidental congressman also made his sister-in-law wait for more than five minutes inside Philippine Airlines Flight PR-001 and delayed its departure.

Airline and airport sources recounted the incident to the INQUIRER on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to talk to reporters.

Witnesses said Iggy Arroyo looked like he was nursing a hangover or just wasn't in good form.

A staff member of the congressman said he had been ill since Friday and surmised his demeanor was due to the common cold.

"We know that he was considering not going with the party because he was not feeling all that well, but he must have decided to push on because of prior commitments," said the staffer, who also asked not to be identified.

Protocol dictates that the President should always be the last passenger to board the aircraft on official trips.

Not yesterday.

Departure ceremonies for Ms Arroyo at the gallery of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Centennial Terminal had already been completed.

Vice President Noli de Castro, Cabinet secretaries, ranking military and police officers were returning to the terminal's Presidential Lounge when the congressman staggered into view, trailed by a member of the Presidential Security Group.

Iggy Arroyo wore a dark suit. His hair was a bit disheveled. He had bloodshot eyes. His left pants leg was curiously tucked into his sock.

Airline staff had kept the door of the Airbus 340 open for the President's brother-in-law, normally smart and well-groomed on trips abroad.

'Ikaw talaga'

As soon as Representative Arroyo stepped inside the aircraft, a voice that sounded like that of First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo's boomed: *"Ikaw talaga!"* Read: You again!

The search for Iggy Arroyo, one of the First Family's magnets for controversy, had begun as the presidential party of 133 started gathering at the airport.

Some said the congressman was caught in a traffic jam. One said he had run back to his car in the parking lot to get some papers. Others thought he was in one of the toilets.

Disaster meeting

All this happened while Ms Arroyo was presiding over a meeting of the National Disaster Coordinating Council at the Presidential Lounge as a tropical storm sliced across central Philippines. *(See story on Page A1.)*

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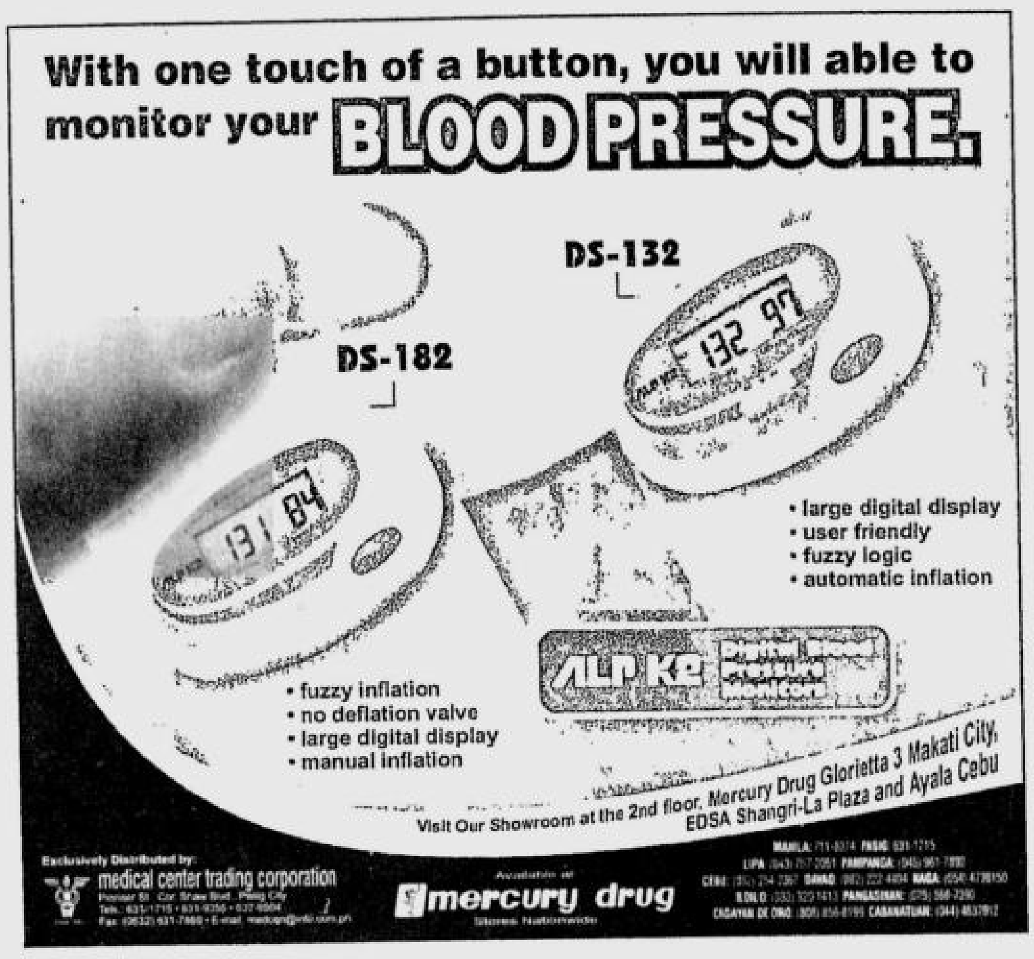

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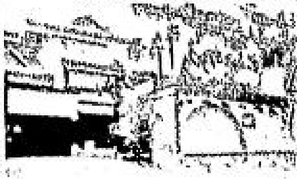

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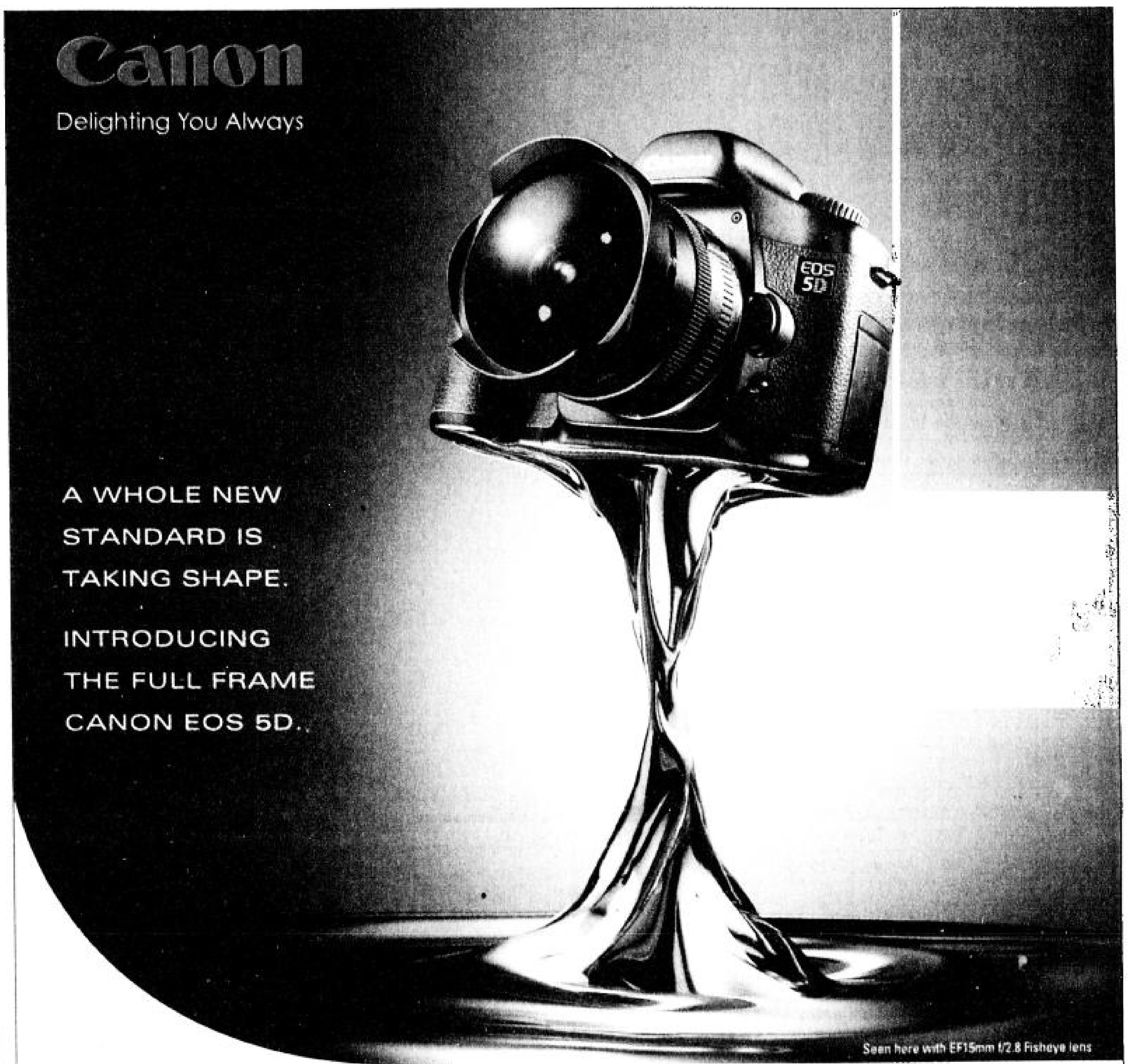
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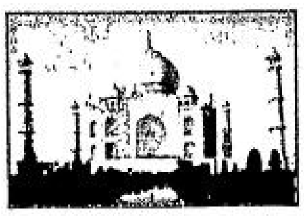

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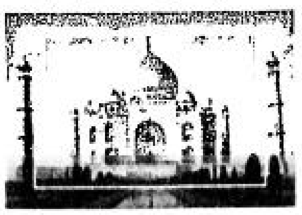

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CBCP: Hidden agenda behind sex education

By Christian V. Esguerra

THERE'S MORE TO THE DEPARTMENT OF Education's controversial modules on sex education than simply teaching students about sexuality, a top official of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) said yesterday.

"The modules are a way to push the hidden agenda of the United Nations Population Fund (UNPF) population control program," Archbishop Paciano Aniceto, chair of the CBCP Episcopal Commission on Family and Life, said yesterday in an interview over Radio Veritas.

Among other things, the UNPF funds programs like the modules on sex education were to be incorporated into the high school curriculum despite strong opposition from the Catholic Church.

Aniceto said he was against euphemisms used in international discussions on population matters that purportedly concealed issues such as abortion.

"When the UN says reproductive rights of women, it means the right of the woman to be the first executioner of her baby—that is abortion," the prelate from San Fernando, Pampanga, said. "This is contained in the minutes of UN conventions."

What the Church found offensive in the modules was the alleged absence of values, according to Aniceto.

"Ours is a very secularist state," he said. "There are no values included [in sex education]."

It was not clear if the modules teach the use of condoms in the practice of safe sex. Condom use in the country remains relatively low despite aggressive promotion by the Department of Health and its advocacy partners like the UNPF and the Philippine AIDS Council.

Aniceto, however, was not taking any chances and asked the faithful yesterday to monitor the use of the modules in the public schools.

"We have to be vigilant," he said. "I've spoken with one school superintendent and he said that the modules were official but were yet to be distributed. Let us respect the majority of our taxpayers who are Catholics and Christians."

Aniceto maintained that sex education was better taught by the parents to their children, "in a mature atmosphere and in preparation for marriage."

"Sex and sexuality are sacred," he said. "They are gifts from God so they should be taught only in the context of the family."

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Monday, June 26, 2006
12th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: 2 K 17:5-8, 13-15, 18
Gospel: Matthew 7:1-5

Jesus said to his disciples, "Do not judge and you will not be judged. In the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and the measure you use for others will be used for you. Why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye and not see the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother: 'Come, let me take the speck from your eye,' as long as that plank is in your own? Hypocrite, take first the plank out of your own eye, then you will see clear enough to take the speck out of your brother's eye."

Commentary

The Lord keeps warning his people through every prophet to listen and change their ways as they live in the midst of wars, lands being conquered by Assyria, and attacks. But they are stiff-necked and do not obey. They do not believe and they ignore the covenant, and so God 'put them away out of his sight.' This is a fearful thing brought on by the peoples' lives. This too is the God of Jesus. We are told about judgment, which all of us do regularly—that we will receive the verdict we lay on others. We are good at seeing others' evil and shortcomings but not so good at looking at ours. Time for us to change!

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2 Pinoy oil workers in Nigeria freed

ABUJA—NIGERIAN KIDNAPPERS FREED two Filipino oil workers on Sunday, five days after seizing them in the southern Niger Delta where a six-month wave of abductions and attacks has crippled Africa's biggest oil industry.

Spokespersons for Rivers State, where the men were seized on Tuesday by six gunmen in a speedboat, gave no details on the kidnappers or their demands.

"They are already on their way. In less than an hour they will be in government house. The security people have told me to get cameramen and photographers ready," said Emma Okah, a spokesperson for Rivers State.

Militant group the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND), which demands greater local control of the oil wealth, has staged bloody attacks on oil facilities that have shut down a quarter of Nigeria's output since February.

MEND, which has kidnapped and released a total of 18 foreign oil workers this year, said it was not involved in the abduction of the Filipinos.

The two men were under contract to Norwegian-based oil services company Petroleum Geo-Services (PGS). Their direct employer is a company called Beaufort International.

A PGS spokesperson said he had no information about the release of the men. *Reuters*

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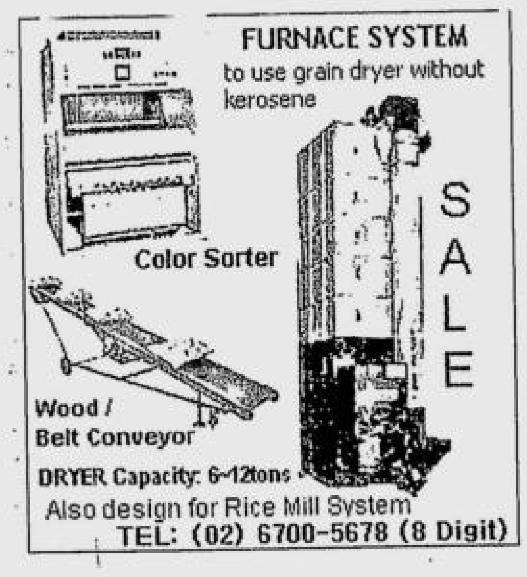
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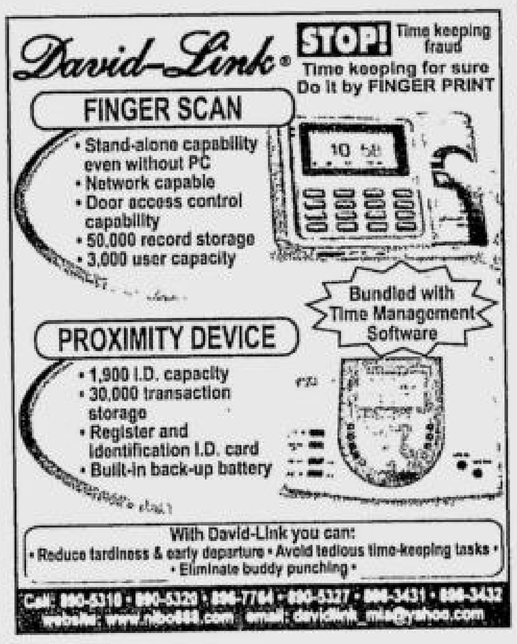
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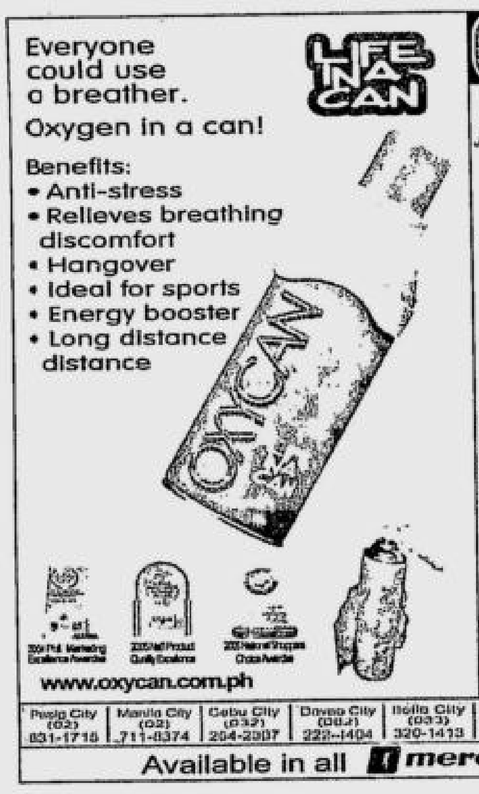
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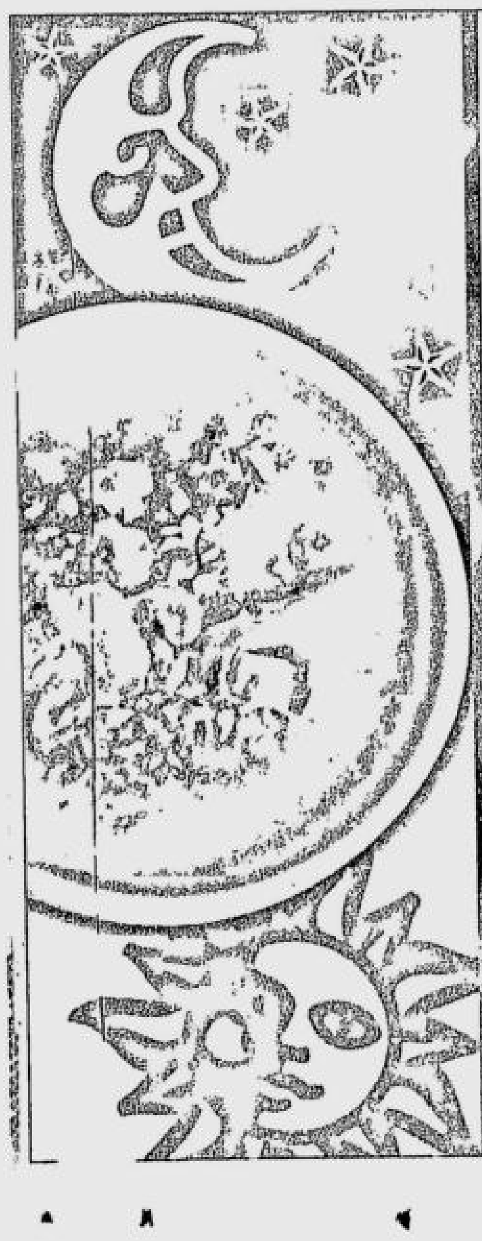

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Reyes: No guarantees vs mine accidents

By Blanche S. Rivera

DESPITE ITS EFFORTS TO PROMOTE RESponsible mining, the government cannot guarantee that mining accidents, such the Rapu-Rapu mine tailing spills, will not happen again.

Environment Secretary Angelo T. Reyes admitted that the Department of Environment and Natural Resources could not fully assure the communities near mining sites that they would be safe from any accidents in the future.

Close monitoring

"Whether we can assure that no accidents will happen again for all mining (projects), we're instituting measures. We will monitor very closely but we would not give a 100-percent assurance," Reyes told a recent forum at the Manila Pavilion.

"Anybody who gives a 100-percent assurance is lying," he said when asked if the government could assure that no mine accidents would happen again under the Philippines' revived mining industry.

Order lifted

Reyes has temporarily lifted the cease-and-desist order against Lafayette Philippines Inc. after suspending its gold processing operations at Rapu-Rapu island in Albay for seven months due to two mine tailings spills in October last year.

The DENR allowed the Australian mining firm to do a 30-day test run which would determine if Lafayette could resume full operations. A P10.4-million fine was paid by the firm for violating the Clean Water Act.

The company, however, still has to fulfill certain technical requirements.

Litmus test

"This incident is a litmus test so we're very careful how we handle it," Reyes said.

He said the test-run would be "supervised very, very closely" by third party experts.

Environmentalists and some local officials have opposed the revival of mining operations by Lafayette.

"We're going to go hard on companies that don't observe responsible mining... We will be very, very harsh with them," Reyes said.

He said the penalties imposed on Lafayette were already harsh, going by the standards of Canadian and Australian officials with whom he had spoken.

Memories

The mine spills at Rapu-Rapu on Oct. 11 and 31 last year brought back memories of one of the world's most disastrous mining incidents in Marinduque.

A tailings dam at the mine site operated by Marcopper and Canadian mining giant Placer Dome collapsed in 1996, contaminating nearby rivers and causing illnesses among the residents.

The mining accident sent more than a million tons of toxic mine tailings down to Calancan Bay, a source of food and livelihood for surrounding communities in Marinduque.

No toxic spill from barge, says Guard

CAMP VICENTE LIM, LAGUNA—THE Philippine Coast Guard yesterday assured the public the barge loaded with sulfuric acid that sank early Saturday in the waters of Bauan, Batangas, did not cause a major spill in Batangas Bay.

Lt. Commander Darryl Vargas, duty officer of the Coast Guard regional office in Batangas City, said they had contained the toxic chemicals in the *Billy Star* and prevented it from spilling into the water.

"We just would like to make it clear that there is no major spill from the barge," Vargas told the INQUIRER over the phone.

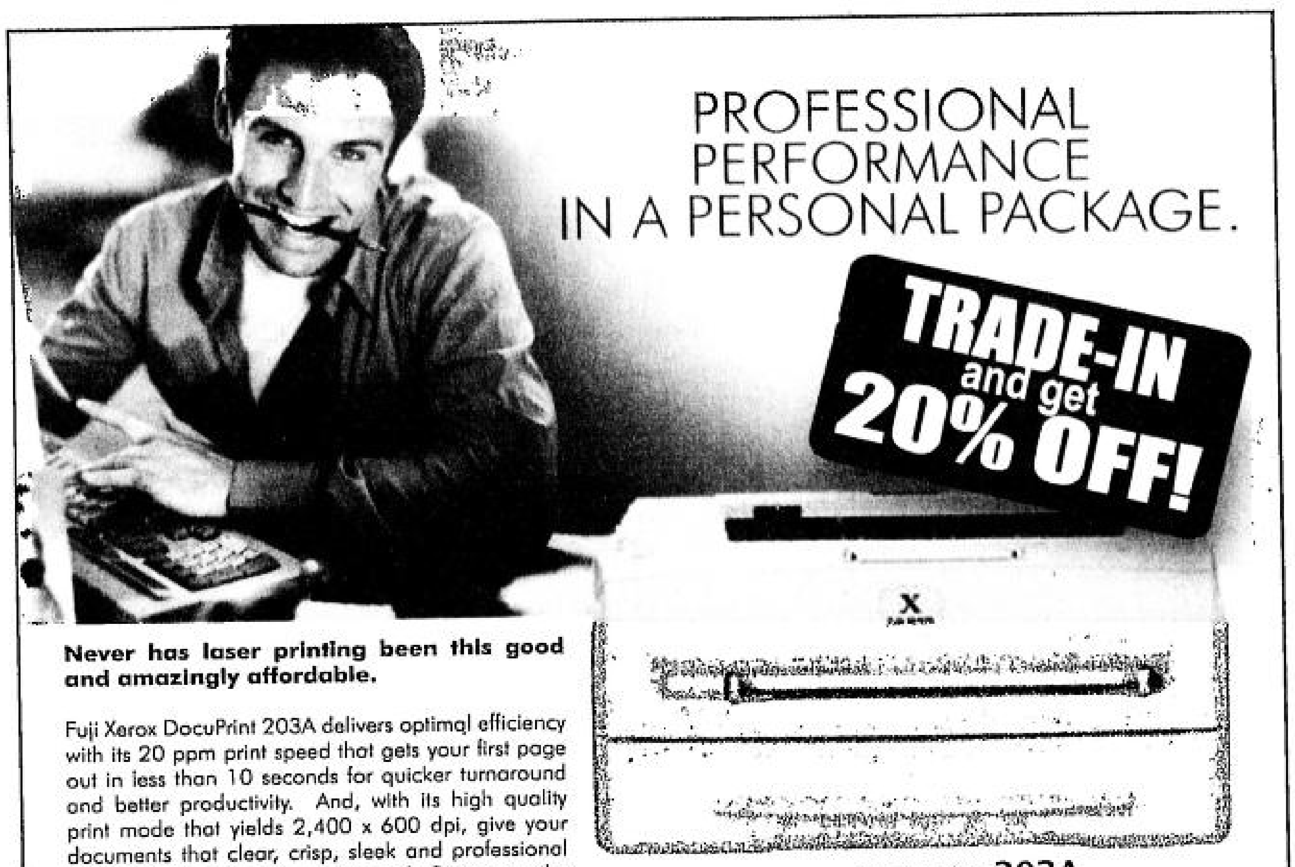
He said the PCG had cordoned off the sunken vessel to avoid any potential environmental destruction.

Vargas said despite the heavy rains brought by typhoon "Domeng," the Coast Guard was able to refloat the barge and bring it to drydock.

The barge, he said, was undergoing repairs since June 14 at the Keppel shipyard in Barangay San Miguel, Bauan, when the incident was reported at 12:40 a.m. on Saturday.

He said the barge was undergoing repairs after its tank containing 1,270 metric tons of sulphuric acid was damaged by typhoon "Caloy" last month.

Vargas said the barge sank when seawater entered its bottom hull which had cracked due to corrosion. *Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*



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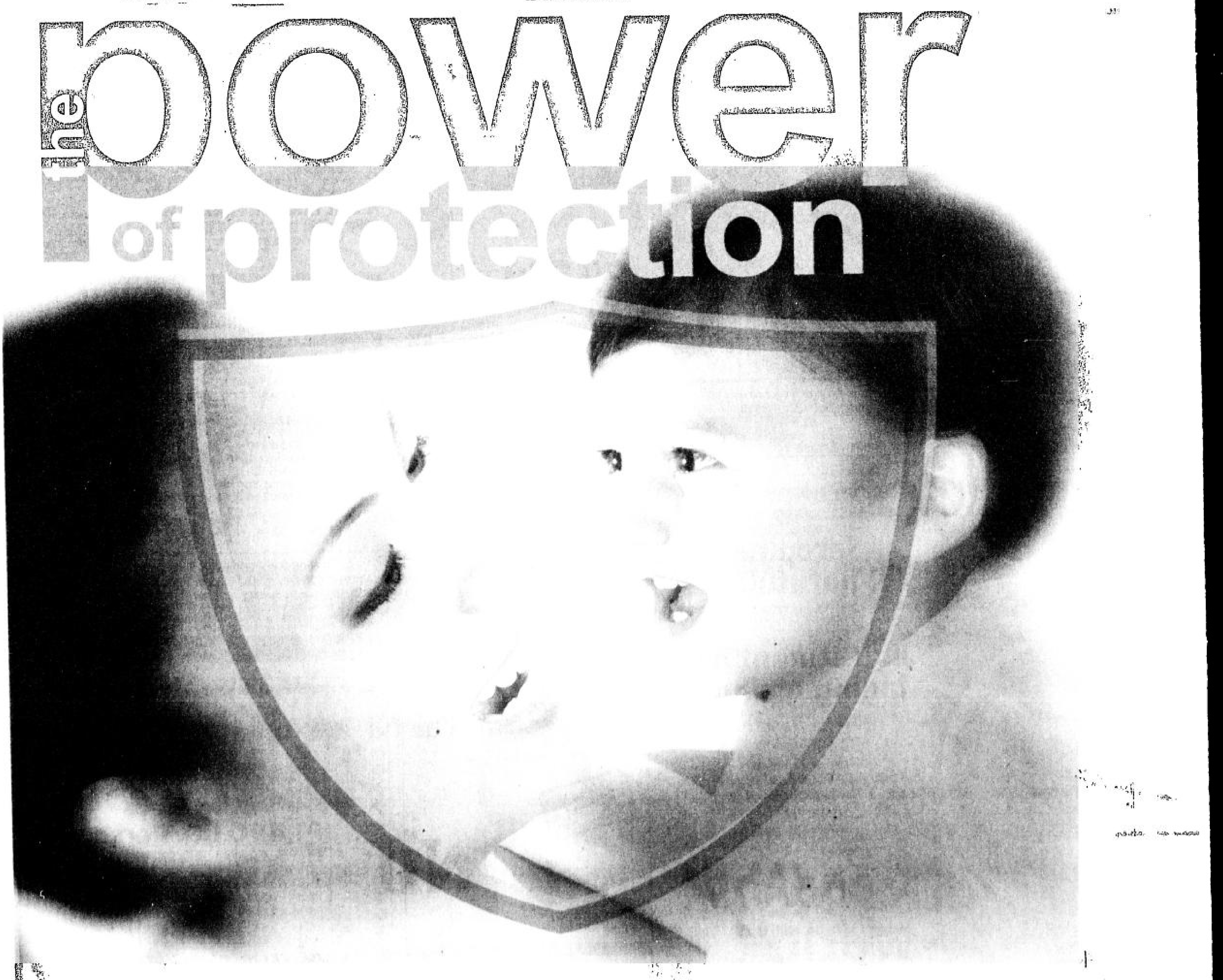

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Lozano laughs off vigil for impeachment complaint

From page A1

House Minority Leader Francis Escudero and his colleagues to the punch amid mounting calls for the President's resignation over charges of election fraud and corruption.

Lozano, who gained prominence as a leader of a rabble of Marcos loyalists and later as a sort of ambulance-chasing lawyer in high-profile political cases, had a decidedly weak case.

The minority came up on Lozano's heels, throwing every charge against the President in its impeachment complaint.

Because of a rule that only one impeachment case could be considered in one year, Ms Arroyo's dominant allies threw out the complaint of Escudero and company. They considered the Lozano complaint and promptly killed it.

Lozano has dismissed suggestions that he was in league with the Palace in a sinister move to torpedo the case of the House minority.

'Bantay Oliver Watch'

Because of the opposition's failure last year, concerned citizens and groups last week decided to take matters into their own hands—mounting a "Bantay Oliver" watch to prevent Lozano and others like him from preempting what organizers said was a chance to give Ms Arroyo her day in court and answer the charges against her once and for all.

Around 300 people, including priests and nuns, began gathering yesterday afternoon at the Batasan complex parking lot for the overnight prayer vigil. It was to go on until the complaint was filed when offices opened today at 8 a.m.

A copy of the impeachment complaint released to the INQUIRER accuses the 59-year-old President of culpable violation of the Constitution, graft and corruption and betrayal of public trust.

The charges stemmed from allegations of fraud committed during the May 2004 election, the use of public funds and illegal gambling payoffs to finance the President's poll campaign, and the exercise of "dictatorial powers" to cover up her tracks.

The complainants pointed to the calibrated response policy to keep protesters off the streets, the gag rule under Executive Order No. 464 and the exercise of police powers under a declaration of a state of national emergency. These measures were subsequently declared illegal by the Supreme Court.

Organizers expect some 300 individuals and 150 organizations to sign the complaint, which the House minority will endorse.

Deputy Minority Leader Alan Peter Cayetano said the complaint was "shorter and more precise" than the 78-page paper the opposition filed last year.

"We focus more on the cover-up she made," he said.

Representatives Monico Puentevella of Bacolod City and Salacnib Baterina of Ilocos Sur criticized the latest impeachment move.

"Political puppeteers behind these stage-managed events should stop using the impeachment process for political gain," they said in a joint statement.

"We call on the people to wake up and smell the foul stench of opportunism. The vigil is all about wannabes seeking to jumpstart their senatorial and reelection campaigns."

As if taunting the anti-Arroyo forces, Lozano said he never felt better. He said there was no need to show up at the Batasan complex today because he had already refiled his old impeachment complaint.

He warned the opposition-backed citizens' group that it was futile to file another case against the President.

Lozano said he subscribed to the view expressed by Ms Arroyo's lawyer, Romulo Macalintal, that the House would not entertain any new impeachment complaint unless the Supreme Court acted on an opposition petition to nullify the House decision last year.

The House had then ruled that the complaint lacked form and substance. The opposition also failed to muster the required 79 votes to initiate a trial of the charges in the Senate.

Lozano said he expected the so-called citizens' move to impeach the President to be promptly thrashed by the House once it convened the third regular session of the 13th Congress in late July because of his pending, refiled complaint.

He said he believed the high court would junk the opposition petition challenging the dismissal of the impeachment complaint. "The justices will say it's a political question, and thus it does not belong (to the realm of the judiciary)," he said.

Blessing in disguise

According to Lozano, it would be a "blessing in disguise" once the House rejected the citizens' complaint because his document last year had been already endorsed by 51 House members last year.

"The opposition has a fallback position—the Lozano-opposition amended impeachment complaint," he said. "It's substantially the same as the new citizens' impeachment complaint anyway."

"The opposition needs only 28 signatures. If it will start from scratch, it will gather signatures all over again," Lozano said.

He added that the House minority should endorse the old consolidated complaint instead of pushing through with the filing of a new complaint.

"What is my basis? The Macalintal opinion. As the lawyer of the President, it's deemed to be the President's directive to her allies in Congress to thrash the citizens' complaint. But the opposition should not worry because I already preempted the Macalintal move by refiling (my) complaint," Lozano said.

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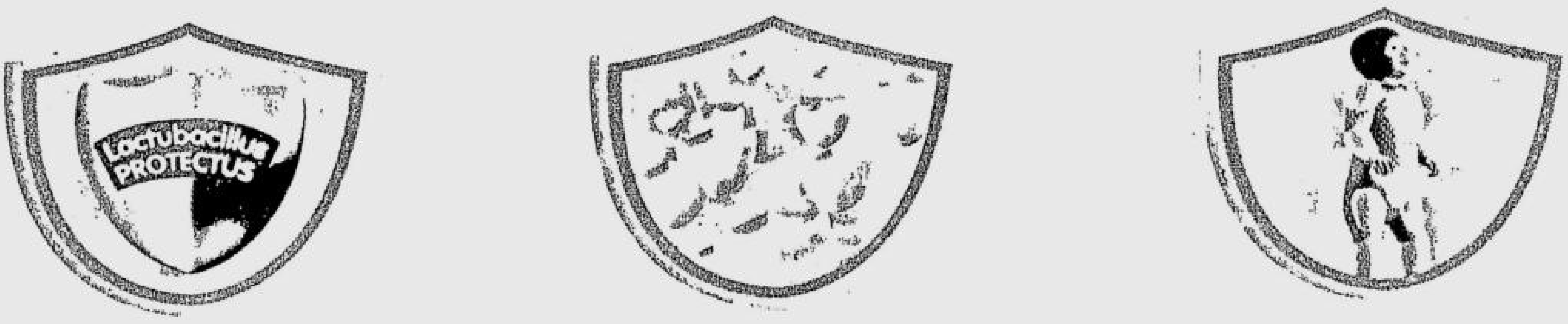

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Wanted: Generals

EDITORIAL

WITHIN A MONTH, AND BARRING ANY EXTENSION of their term of office, the country's only four-star generals will retire from the armed services. Director General Arturo Lomibao, chief of the Philippine National Police, will leave office a few weeks before Gen. Generoso Senga, chief of staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines. But from the public-policy perspective, their retirement is a single event, a single rite of transition.

Transition to what? That is what the public will want to know, what the media will closely watch; President Macapagal-Arroyo's appointments will tell us which direction we are heading in.

Politics as usual. We have always sought the dismantling of the so-called revolving door, because the practice of filling high public-service posts with short-term appointments is contrary to the public interest. At best, it is rank politicking, a reward for the loyal; at worst, it is legalized bribery. The responsibilities of the AFP chief of staff or the PNP chief are heavy and complicated; they cannot be fully discharged, in the public's best interests, when the office-holder has only a few months to hold the office.

We believe—as sponsors of bills mandating fixed terms for the two top positions do—that important initiatives require that rarest of resources: time. We share the common view that mere months in office, or even a year-long tenure, do not give these initiatives enough time to bear fruit. A short-term appointment may honor the favored one with a fourth star, but at what cost to the institution?

Unfortunately, over the last five years, the President has proven herself the "master of the revolving door," even appointing officials only two or three months away from retirement. Given the continuing crisis of legitimacy she faces (a fact which her many spokespersons deny, but which, when making appointments, she ignores to her peril), she may be tempted to continue using the two top positions to reward loyalty, or curry it.

All-out war. The President and her inner circle of advisers have decided to upgrade the national security threat posed by the communist insurgency to a life-or-death, Huks-knocking-on-the-gates-of-the-capital concern. In part, this is because the post-Edsa II civil-society euphoria and then the post-Sept. 11 war-on-terrorism paranoia failed to provide the Arroyo administration with the overarching framework or the connecting narrative it needed to sustain itself in the second half of its (extended) term. Now, the communists-are-coming storyline provides the administration with a convenient cover for cracking down on those opposed to it.

Will she appoint ideological generals to head the AFP or the PNP? This will be the surest sign that the Arroyo administration's new hard-line position is not merely rhetorical, but real. It is one thing when, say, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye avoids making a distinction between a communist rebel and a street protester; it is altogether another thing when someone like Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan blithely assumes that a militant activist peacefully demonstrating for human rights and an armed insurgent planning an ambush are one and the same.

Return to the Center. It is unlikely, we know, given the Arroyo administration's survivalist frame of mind. But it is still possible that the President will appoint apolitical professionals to succeed Senga and Lomibao. As an economist, a student of the consequences of choice, the President must surely have already realized that riding the militarist tiger, as she did last February when she declared a state of national emergency, has severely limited her options.

For one thing, the tiger is in a position to shape **her** decisions. This will be the worst of all possible outcomes of the President's continuing crisis of legitimacy. Instead of being resolved peacefully, within the political process, it may well invite the army to march into the public square.

President Arroyo can help prevent that from happening by returning the armed services to actual, not lip-service, neutrality.

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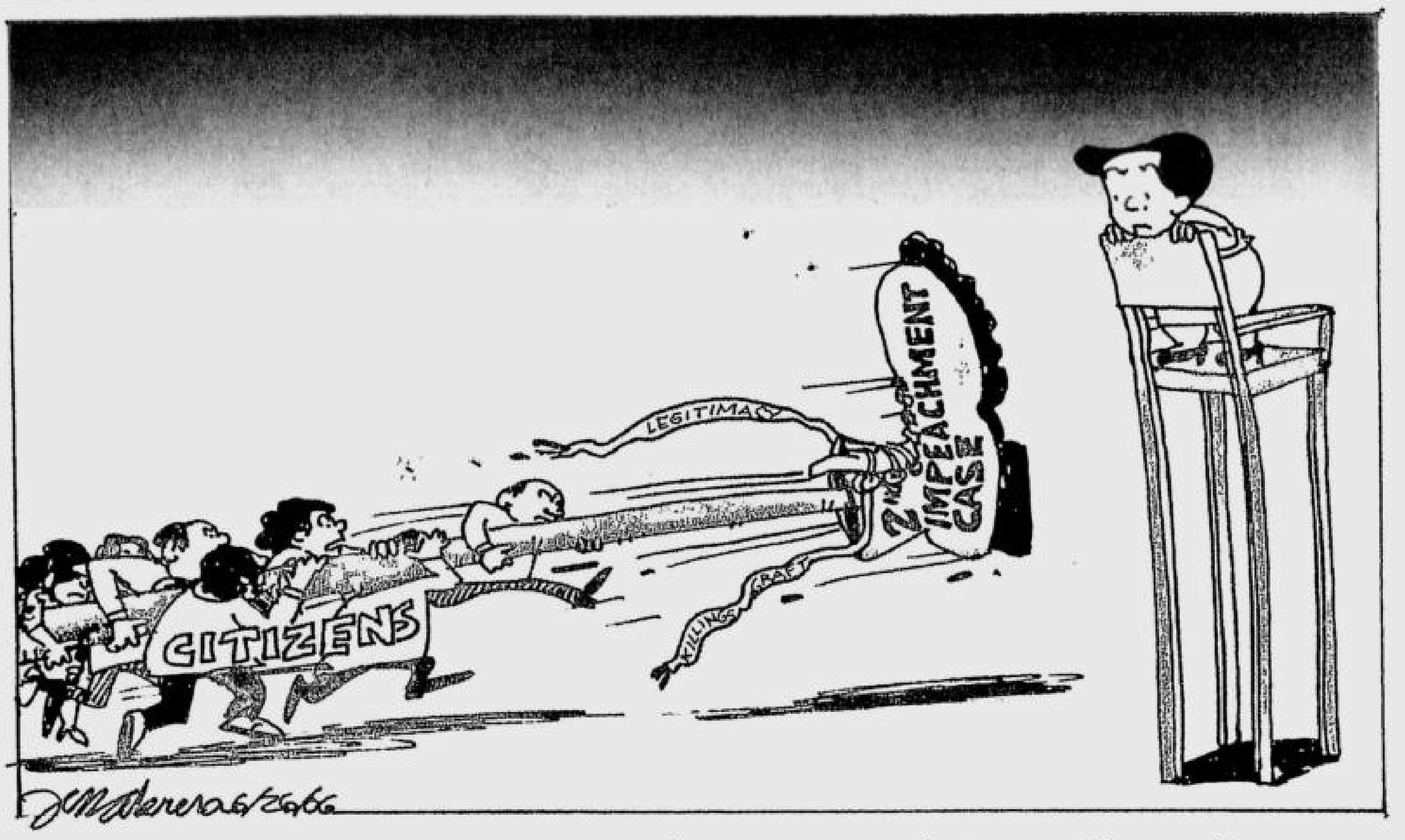


RP mercenaries are here, pushing Cha-cha

As I See It

Neal H. Cruz

WHETHER THE CHARTER CHANGE MOVEMENT will succeed or not depends on a five-letter word: Trust. So many people are opposed to Cha-cha because they do not trust the people behind it.

President Macapagal-Arroyo wants Cha-cha to stave off moves to oust her. Speaker Jose de Venecia wants it because that is the only way he can snare the position of Chief Executive—a position that has escaped him for many years. Former President Ramos wants it because that is the only way he can become Chief Executive again. The congressmen want it because they will get a bonus of, at least, three years more in the House without having to run for reelection; and without a Senate to check them in a parliamentary system, they can do pretty much whatever they want. Local government officials want it because, like the House members, they will also get the three-year term bonus, not to mention the financial bonuses they are now getting from the administration, for pushing Cha-cha.

In other words, their motive for pushing Cha-cha is not the good of the country as they claim; it's another five-letter word: Money. Therefore, the people pushing it are mercenaries. And we thought Filipino mercenaries are in Iraq and Afghanistan. No, they're right here.

You won't recognize them because they're not in military uniform. They're mostly in coat and tie, and in *barong*. They ride expensive vehicles and many of them are called "congressman," "governor," "mayor," "secretary," "commissioner," "director," or by other honorable-sounding titles. But their souls are as black and dirty as the mercenaries you find in Africa.

Open the secret pockets of most of those pushing the Cha-cha and you will find dirty money there—money squeezed by this administration from taxpayers already groaning under the weight of high prices. Ironically, you will also find in their ranks lay preachers who used to preach the Word of God but who are now preaching the virtues of Cha-cha. For these mercenaries, the "returns" must be too generous to resist.

Now if you were an ordinary Filipino citizen, could you sleep soundly at night knowing that should the Constitution be changed, the fate of the nation would be in the hands of these people? Would you not fight tooth and nail to prevent a Cha-cha?

If we have to Cha-cha, it should be after the present crop of politicians have been driven out of power or wiped off the face of this earth. While they're holding sway, we cannot expect them to produce a good Constitution. The new Charter will only perpetuate their existing privileges and even add to them.

It is standard practice that those who write laws exempt themselves from the benefits bestowed by the laws they write. Not for the drafters of the proposed Cha-cha; they want to be the first beneficiaries of Cha-cha. The members of the Consultative Commission will automatically become members of the parliament (MPs) without having to run for election. Incumbent congressmen, governors and mayors will get bonus extensions of their terms of office. The MPs will select the justices of the Supreme Court. The executive and legislative departments will be combined in parliament. And, horror or horrors, in all likelihood, the present congressmen will still be the MPs! Can you think of a more horrible future for our country?

This is the worst time to change the Constitution, when mercenaries of all stripes are riding all over the country like the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse.

* * *

A bum stomach could not stop President Macapagal-Arroyo from going on a junket. She left on a chartered airliner yesterday for Rome and Spain, bringing along with her Big Mike and the rest of her family, along with 55 (by conservative count just before they planed off) public officials, *alalays*, camp followers and their spouses. All their expenses will be paid for by Filipino taxpayers who can hardly feed their families three square meals a day because of the high prices of basic goods.

What good will GMA's trips do for the country? None, except give her a chance to claim, when she returns, that the Pope, who has a hotline to God, had told her not to leave Malacañang, and that the Spanish royalty had told her to do to Filipino rebels what the Spaniards did to them centuries ago.

* * *

How would you like to watch and listen to Elvis Presley live? Go to the Front Page piano bar on T.M. Kalaw Street, Ermita, Manila this Friday and Saturday, June 30 and July 1. Starting at 8 p.m., you can watch and listen to not just one but several Elvis Presleys. Not the real Elvis come-back-to-life, but look-alikes who sing, strum the guitar and gyrate like him.

I won't give you their names just yet, but I assure you that they are the best Elvis Presley impersonators in the country today, having won Elvis titles in various contests. A bonus will be the youngest Elvis Presley impersonator (only 9 years old) ever.

This Elvis Presley madness will be followed a few weeks later by a Frank Sinatra fiesta with Sinatra wannabes trying to sound like Old Blue Eyes himself. Wait for further announcements.

* * *

TODAY'S JOKE: An engineer died and went to hell. Finding the conditions there, well, hellish, he proceeded to make changes. He set up an air-conditioning system, made an ice cream-making machine, a freezer and a refrigerator.

Up in heaven, God saw the improvements that the engineer had made in hell. He told the devil to send the engineer to heaven. "There was a mistake," God said, "he should have been sent here, not to hell."

"Wait a minute," replied the devil, "what's done is done. He stays here."

"If you don't send him up here," God warned, "I will sue you."

The devil chuckled. "And where will you get lawyers?" he asked. "They're all here."

Seeing Red

There's the Rub

Conrado de Quiros

LAST TIME AROUND, I SAID THE REASON Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has launched a war against the Reds—notwithstanding that the Reds are no longer the force they were during Marcos' and Cory's time, indeed notwithstanding that they have become a pale shadow of it—is that she needs a scapegoat, no more and no less than Marcos and Hitler did, to channel the people's resentments toward a manufactured threat and divert their attention from a very real one. That remains the primary reason we have a war whose justifications are worlds flimsier than the so-called "war against terror" which GMA also launched shortly after 9/11 with nothing to show for it.

But there are a couple of other reasons why she has done so.

The first is to solidify her hold on the military. At the very least, a war against the New People's Army enables her to reward her favorite generals with largesse for services rendered in the past and to be rendered in the future. GMA bribes her generals under conditions of peace, it will be seen as a bribe. She bribes her generals under conditions of war, it will be seen as resolutely prosecuting a campaign—especially as the war is being advertised as achieving victory in two years' time.

Will she be embarrassed if she fails to do as promised? Well, she did say she wasn't going to run for president and did. Was she embarrassed? And in any case, however the war ends, even if her efforts to butcher the enemy succeeds only in swelling its ranks and strengthens its resolve to fight back, Mike Defensor, Ignacio Bunye and the two Prosperos (Nograles and Pichay) can always be counted upon to call it a smashing victory. These are people who are not particularly constrained by reality.

You have a war, nobody will look too closely at the budget and the emergency allocations thrown at the generals like scraps of meat to dogs. Or one can do so only on pain of being called a communist or a sympathizer, with nasty consequences. That is no longer facetious in these times.

At the most, GMA solidifies her hold on the military by pushing back the reformist-minded junior officers in favor of the reactionary and corrupt—and, therefore, "buy-able" senior officers. Lest we forget, Malacañang, with the consent or connivance of the AFP brass, has already tried to link some of the Magdalo officers to the communist cause, a thing the officers naturally and rightly have denied furiously.

For years the restive officers have been saying that the real problem in the AFP is that the top brass is staggeringly corrupt, stripping the rank-and-file of their sustenance and the combat soldiers in Mindanao, in particular, quite literally of their boots. For years, the officers have been saying that the real problem in society is not the insurgency but the roots of the insurgency, which are poverty and oppression; it makes no sense to shoot down people who are merely desperately seeking rescue or respite from them. For years the officers have been saying that the real problem in this country is not those who are hungry for power and are trying to grab it with force, but the one person who craves power like breath itself she has grabbed it by farce—and now keeps it by force.

But you declare a war against the Reds, and, voila, the disease becomes the cure, the problem becomes the solution, the bane becomes the boon. Suddenly, the same corrupt generals whose contribution to humanity consists of continuing to foist a usurper upon a hapless people become knights in shining armor ready to slay the dragon. Suddenly, the largely idealistic young men and women in uniform who take duty and honor seriously become allied with the enemy by opposing a corrupt and illegitimate regime. Suddenly, the one person who has brought plague and ruination on this country, such as has not been seen since the days of Marcos—and probably not even then—becomes the savior who will rid this country of its scourge.

The second, and more frightening, additional reason for the war is that it gives a legal or psychological mantle to the killings. As George W. Bush, has shown, you have a war, notably one propagandized as life-and-death, you can justify anything, including the mugging of civil rights with a Homeland Security Act and the invasion of a country that poses the threat not of harboring weapons of mass destruction but of withdrawing oil of gigantic proportions. GMA has lost her claim to fighting terror, not least with The New York Times suggesting she is its best recruiter the way the US Congress then suggested Marcos was the NPA's best recruiter. GMA needs another war to justify the murderous consequences of illegitimacy and dictatorship, and has manufactured one against the Reds.

Without that war, the killings would remain a source of outrage here and abroad. They have already been singled out by the human rights groups, local and international, as a crime against humanity. And even a public grown tired and cynical is being roused to anger and protest by the sheer plethora of the dead and the brazenness of their murder.

You have a war against the Reds and suddenly the dead become "collateral damage," a concept Raul Gonzalez has already explicitly advanced. You are tempted to say you wish he would end up one, except that if he did he would not be around to change his mind. But I don't mind. His mind is already collaterally damaged as it is. You have a war against the Reds, and every dead turns up Red, activists and journalists alike.

But this is the part that takes my breath away. You have GMA relentlessly tearing down every fabric of decency—never mind democracy—in this country, and what are we doing about it?

Well, the opposition is still trying to stop the Cha-cha.

Subversive initiative

SOUNDING BOARD

Fr. Joaquin G. Bernas, S.J.

A COUPLE OF WEEKS AGO, FORMER PRESIDENT Fidel Ramos was quoted as saying that the proponents of Charter change via initiative and referendum should make the decisive step of getting the blessing of the Supreme Court for the strategy they are espousing. I agree 100 percent with President Ramos that there is need for the air to be cleared of the controversy that has been bugging the Sigaw ng Bayan group. I doubt, however, that going to the Supreme Court now will produce the desired result. If the Sigaw group were to bring its shout to the Supreme Court, what it would be asking for, in effect, would be an "advisory opinion."

The Court is not in the business of giving advisory opinions. What the Court has is judicial power, and judicial power means the power to resolve actual controversies by the application of law. At the moment there is no "actual controversy" into which the Court can sink its teeth. What is there is preliminary skirmishing about how revision should be done and what revisions to propose.

How can the Court be drawn into the controversy? Those who oppose Sigaw ng Bayan cannot initiate a case in the Supreme Court as yet. There is no clear legal move yet which they can challenge. The people who can definitively get the Supreme Court into the act are those who support Sigaw. Since Sigaw seems to be so confident that it has everything that is needed to get constitutional revision by initiative and referendum moving, it should now take the decisive preliminary step of asking the Commission on Elections to say that the Sigaw initiative is all legal and to get a plebiscite rolling. Once it does this, I am sure that a whole army of opponents will pounce on Sigaw.

I checked the website of Sigaw ng Bayan and there I found a draft of the petition it plans to file with the Comelec. I do not know how long that draft petition has been languishing in the website. But the draft is a perfect fit for starting a warfare with focus.

The draft petition makes the claim that the signatories "are Filipino citizens, residents and registered voters of the Philippines; and they constitute at least twelve per centum (12%) of all the registered voters in the country, wherein each legislative district is represented by at least three per centum (3%) of all the registered voters therein." It is a factual claim which can be verified by an examination of the records of every legislative district. I was, for instance, in Zamboanga City recently and I was told that there had been no collection of signatures in the two legislative districts of Lobregat country. Is that true or not? And how many more legislative districts will make that claim?

The draft petition next says: "While the same Sec. 2, Art. XVII of the Constitution states that '(T)he Congress shall provide for the implementation of the exercise of this right,' Petitioners respectfully submit that the provisions of Sec. 5 (b) and (c), along with Sec. 7, Republic Act No. 6735, are sufficient enabling details for the people's exercise of the power."

What this petition in simplest terms is saying to the Comelec is: "Look guys! Forget what the Supreme Court said in 1997 when it ordered you not to entertain or take cognizance of any petition for initiative on amendments to the Constitution until a sufficient law shall have been validly enacted to provide for the implementation of the system. The Supreme Court was wrong. Ask the Chief Justice. And if you tell the Court so, it will turn around and revive what it killed in 1997. The Court told Congress to pass a proper law. The laggards did not. Do it yourselves now and make it retroactive to cure all the foolish things that are being done.

"And tell the Supreme Court that what the petition is proposing is not a revision but a mere amendment of key provisions of Articles VI and Article VII. After all, no less than the secretary of justice has said that grammatically you can justify a multiplicity of amendments—even of key provisions—that will not add up to a revision. The secretary of justice is a wise and honorable man."

As can easily be seen, once this draft petition is filed with the Comelec, the real fun will begin. Then there will be what the courts call a "case and controversy" into which the Supreme Court can sink its teeth.

In the remote possibility that the Supreme Court should uphold the claim of Sigaw's petition, we can go full blast in the debate about substance. Before this happens, we can hold our horses about the substance being contemplated by Sigaw, by the House and by the Abueva Commission.

But if the Court should let tragedy fall upon us, surely we will debate whether we should strip the people of the right to vote for a President, whether to do away with elections in 2007, whether to let Jose de Venecia lead the formulation of the revision, whether to fuse the Senate and House into one powerful body with an indefinite life, whether to remove the power of the Supreme Court to check grave abuse of discretion on the part of government officials, whether to expand the commander-in-chief powers of the President to a level rivaling Marcos, and whether to give to the present holders of power longer, more enjoyable and more rewarding tenure.

These are questions that are all preeminently worthy of debate. But, as I said, let Sigaw ng Bayan make the preparatory salvo by bringing its shout to the ears of the Comelec. What is holding Sigaw back?

The secret identity of Ferdinand Marcos (2)

KRIS-CROSSING MINDANAO

Noralyn Mustafa

(Continued from the June 5 column)

WHEN I OPENED THE FIRST ENVELOPE IN October 2001, its contents appeared to me to be a confusing compilation of documents, clippings, narratives and even scribblings, enough to turn off even the most curious.

Worse, some of the most important pieces of information were either found at the back of some very unrelated materials or scribbled on margins of what appeared to be just second copies of some pages.

The contents of the second envelope were similarly arranged, as if they were either compiled by someone not entirely in full control of his faculties, or with the intent to confuse.

I don't know if it had anything to do with my comprehension skills, but it took several browsings and repeated scrutinizing, much like sifting the grains from the chaff, to form a workable and logical picture of the matter.

And the picture I got was mind-boggling. Too incredible to be believed, yet too believable to be dismissed. In short, the kind of stuff best-selling novels and good movies are made of.

Among the documents are listings of deposits, of cash and precious metals in several foreign banks. The listings are complete with account numbers and codes, and even land titles issued by Spanish monarchs; and they point to an enormous stash of wealth that—as newscasters would breathlessly describe the Imelda jewels—could be "*nakakalula*," but a hundred, maybe, a thousand times more.

The narrative that can be pieced together from the envelopes' contents surpasses the plot of the Korean TV series "Jewel in the Palace" in its intrigue, mystery and complexities, but most of all, in its far-reaching implications. Yet, for all its seeming incredibility, it is validated by historical facts that go as far back to our nation's very beginnings, and its cast of characters are real people, many of them still living.

Sifting further through the chaff, I uncovered the oft-repeated story of a historical wrong presented in a different perspective, thus clarifying—much better than published articles and books on the subject—the very roots of our discontent which, after centuries, still poses a threat to our nation, more especially now that it has assumed a terrifying affinity to and (even more ominously) empathy with the global threat of terrorism.

It was after forming a comprehensible picture from the bits and pieces of information that I remembered my meeting with President Marcos 30 years ago and the very curious note I received from him later—a note that at that time I did not find extraordinary.

Now and then, I would wonder why he referred to Princess Tarhata Kiram as "my aunt," but then I would conclude that it could have been just a sign of respect (I belong to a culture where even someone who has the remotest resemblance to your long lost nephew calls you "auntie"); or, maybe, she had "adopted" him because the Sultanate, through the late Sultan Esmail Kiram, had authorized him with a power of attorney to act on its behalf in the resolution of the Sabah claim.

The note appeared to simply define what I was supposed to do, among other things, as media specialist in the Department of Public Information. I imagined somebody up north, "an Igorot working in the Cordilleras, etc.," receiving exactly the same note with slight alterations. But then coming as it did from the President himself, the note somehow assumed a sense of secrecy and urgency, and thus appeared something "important."

But I would also wonder, after "observing everything, including the smallest details": What were we supposed to do with the observations? Were we to write about them or channel the information to him? Was there some kind of feedback mechanism in place?

To me, the most telling document was President Marcos' letter, purportedly mailed from Hawaii, confirming his designation as the administrator of this incredible wealth. Another piece of paper stated that Marcos was a "young lawyer" when he was assigned as "trustee."

In the letter, where he referred to himself as Sultan Juhan (there were references to him as someone with the code name Sultan Juhan E. Kandaw), he asked for forgiveness from his cousin (the relation is traced through their mothers) for whatever wrong he has done the family. He also gave the name of the person to whom he had entrusted the means to claim the deposits and retrieve the other assets.

Significantly, among the obligations of the present claimants of this incredible wealth was the payment of damages to the 10,000 human rights victims of martial law. Equally significant—although apparently not the intention of the compilation or even the source of the documents—is that if valid, the documents somehow clarify the issue of the so-called ill-gotten wealth, which includes the fabulous jewel collection.

In my interviews with some people—very few but helpful—more questions rather than answers came up. In the years that the Presidential Commission on Good Government and countless individuals have been trying to trace the Marcos treasure, what we have so far is a meticulously documented paper trail. But where did it all come from?

Did Marcos really plunder the national treasury of those billions that are now in Irene Araneta's account and elsewhere? Was the Marcos rule of 20 years a "kleptocracy"?

I don't have the answers to these questions. What I have are copies of documents—unvalidated at this point—that reveal wealth beyond our wildest imaginations: centuries-old riches and certainly not ill-gotten.

You have heard or read about the fabled egg-sized "Pearl of Asia." Well, it seems there are more of them where it came from. *(To be concluded)*

* * *

Comments to rubaiyat19@yahoo.com

Macalintal's surprise

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III

RECALL THAT LAST YEAR, IN ITS 39-PAGE committee report, the House Committee on Justice dismissed the betrayal of public trust charges filed by lawyer Oliver Lozano and by lawyer Jose Lopez on June 27 and 30, 2005, respectively. Also dismissed was the amended Lozano complaint filed by the opposition on July 25, 2005 for culpable violation of the Constitution, bribery, graft and corruption, and betrayal of public trust.

Said the members of the committee: "[The Lopez and amended complaints] are prohibited complaints which are barred by the complaint filed by ... Lozano pursuant to [the constitutional provision barring multiple impeachment complaints from being filed against one official within a year of each other]." The Lozano complaint, on the other hand, was dismissed for insufficiency of substance. The committee argued that the complaint alleging electoral fraud pointed to acts committed before Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's present presidential term. The committee's arguments were ratified by the entire House: 158 yeas and 52 nays, with six abstentions and 20 no shows.

Thus, on Sept. 6, 2005, Ms Arroyo said: "The Filipino people mark a glorious day in history, when instead of forcing a President out of office through people power, they chose to keep a President through voting in the halls of Constitutional Democracy." She was reacting, of course, to the House of Representatives' decision to throw out the impeachment complaints lodged against her. She called the decision "a grand display of political maturity that seals our stability and resilience as a nation battling the vagaries of a challenging age, and poised for takeoff."

But on June 21, 2006, lawyer Romulo Macalintal announced, in effect, that Ms Arroyo had been wrong after all; far from achieving closure, much less glory, or demonstrating political maturity, the 2005 impeachment bid, he said, was still alive. Yes, alive! Minority legislators, according to Macalintal, had filed a petition before the Supreme Court after the House Committee on Justice dismissed the amended impeachment complaint. The absence of a Supreme Court decision on the matter means that over the past nine months, the impeachment process has only been in a kind of suspended animation, Macalintal argued.

"Suppose today the minority bloc is allowed to file an impeachment case against the President, and then tomorrow the Supreme Court ruled to remand the original case to the House of Representatives. There would then be two cases against the President and that would be a violation of the rules," Macalintal said. Rep. Prospero Pichay immediately took up the cue: "Is the first impeachment case over? This is the legal issue that must be considered now," he remarked like a child feigning innocence to having eaten a cookie in the hope of being given another one.

Then again, even as the Supreme Court has frustrated the administration on EO 464, the Palace keeps on enforcing it, claiming the decision hasn't become final and executory—yet. Well then, the Supreme Court having imposed no injunction against the filing of another impeachment complaint this year, isn't the public entitled to the same presumption of legality as the administration? Besides, can't those objecting to the House decision on the 2005 impeachment complaints—having participated in the formulation and filing of the new complaints—be presumed to have abandoned their previous objections in pursuit of the new ones? And if the House objected to the charges linked to events prior to June 30, 2005, which covered the previous term of Ms Arroyo, well, the new charges firmly cover everything she's done within her present term.

The new charges are powerful: First: GMA exercised dictatorial powers to stifle political dissent triggered by her illegitimate presidency. Second: GMA committed crimes against humanity. She abetted, if not encouraged, the systematic and widespread killings of political dissidents and journalists to silence criticisms against her. Third: GMA criminally concealed her conjugal assets, engaged in graft and corruption, and entered into illegal government contracts.

Each charge stands on its own, and isn't dependent on the other two. The House is tasked to deliberate on each one, and to decide which ones deserve to be prosecuted in the Senate. Each charge needs to be answered, and it is in the detailed reply to each charge, and the things that constitute the grounds for them, that the House and, hopefully, the Senate, with the public observing the process, must make up their minds.

With regard to the first charge: when Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye released two CDs to the public, and Secretary Michael Defensor remarked "that is the President's voice, but that isn't her talking," did a conspiracy to obstruct justice take place, with the consent of Ms Arroyo as principal? When the calibrated preemptive response, EO 464 and 1017 were made official policies, did Ms Arroyo arrogate unto herself powers fit only for a dictator? When she authorized the raid on The Daily Tribune and had the police exert pressure on the publication, did she violate her oath of office; and does the harassment of party-list representatives constitute arbitrary and illegal behavior? As for the allegations of electoral fraud in 2004, did such cheating occur?

While the second charge speaks for itself, what of the third charge: do the Jose Pidal accounts, Piatco bribery allegations, the NorthRail contracts, policies on *jueteng*, as well as the highly partisan handling of the congressional pork barrel constitute behavior that would justify Ms Arroyo's removal from office? To refuse to face these charges now is to ensure that they become central issues in the 2007 elections.

One Voice

COMMENTARY

Eugenia Duran-Apostol

WE READ IN THE INQUIRER LAST WEDNESDAY A CALL from One Voice speaking up for real change.

The full-page paid advertisement specifically calls on everyone to "unite around democratic processes and urgent reforms," and submits that Charter change is patently unnecessary at this point.

One Voice is actually a non-partisan movement of the country's leading citizens from various social sectors, including business, the academe, the clergy, as well as local government and social development groups.

They have a simply written Position Paper with a 5-point proposal that aims to address the present "political impasse." This was not in the full-page ad, but you can download it from their website at www.onevoice.org.ph if you wish to read it at leisure. The document is 21 pages-long but uses a senior-citizen friendly type size.

The 5-point proposal, in toto, is as follows:

1. Discontinue the present "People's Initiative."
2. Implement a Social Reform program *now*.
3. Hold elections in 2007 as scheduled, as an indirect referendum on the term of the present administration and implement genuine electoral reform **now**.
4. Hold a Constitutional Convention—not a Constituent Assembly or Con-Ass—after the 2007 elections assuming that there is an authentic clamor for it.
5. Exert a collective effort to rebuild the trustworthiness of democratic institutions.

One Voice maintains that there is nothing in the present Constitution that prevents government from addressing the people's "vital concerns," such as education reform, health care, food security and livelihood.

As such, there really is no need for the so-called People's Initiative, particularly if the resulting amendments to the 1987 Constitution would "create a powerful unicameral parliament," weaken the Supreme Court as a "check against abuse of power and violation of human rights," and restore the power of the President to declare martial law based on "imminent danger of rebellion," just like the way it was during the Marcos regime.

The principles of the social reform program, on the other hand, are already constitutionally mandated in Article XIII. Its immediate implementation can be done either by the concerned agencies of the executive branch or through legislation.

The last three points mentioned in the One Voice proposal have long been articulated—and vigorously debated—in various fora. Making an informed evaluation of their merits and drawbacks should not be too much of an effort.

After having read the One Voice ad and Position Paper, I immediately got in touch with as many Foundation for Worldwide People Power (FWWPP) trustees as I could to hear their sentiments on the matter.

Our president, Maria Lim Ayuyao, is all for it, as am I. Our secretary and treasurer, Fely Arroyo, was way ahead of us. She signed the original position paper as a member of the 1986 Constitutional Commission.

Trustees Del Lazaro, Dr. Edilberto de Jesus and Panfilo Domingo have likewise expressed support. Dr. De Jesus has long advocated that teachers be freed from the electoral process to strengthen and modernize this democratic institution. Thus, the part about electoral reform has added appeal for him.

I was not able to get in touch with Amando Doronila, but I'm sure we will all be reading what he has to say soon enough.

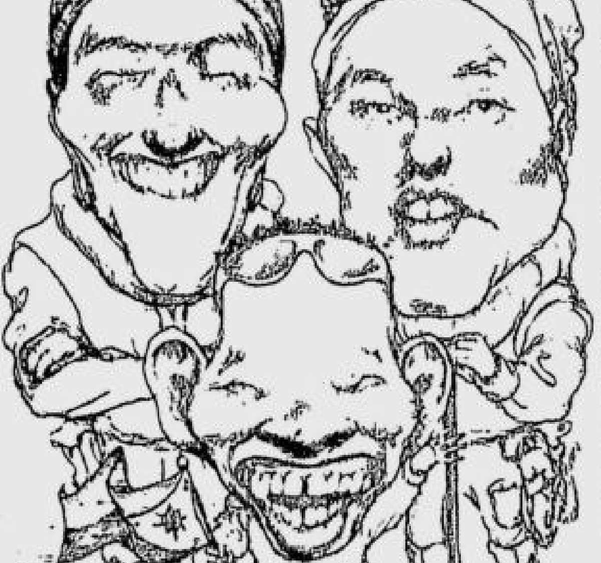
On the other hand, Dr. Jose V. Abueva has a dissenting opinion, because he has been an ardent proponent of federalism and he would like to see this realized in the near future.

The FWWPP views One Voice with serious interest, especially because this movement prioritizes genuine education reform. Many of you probably know by now that the FWWPP's Education Revolution is anchored on the belief that broad popular access to quality education is the only viable long-term solution to poverty.

We would like to add our signatures to One Voice, with the exception of Dr. Abueva, of course. We are a democracy, after all.

(You may send e-mail to the author at edapostol@fwwpp.org.)

IN THE NEWS



Leo Oracion, Erwin Emata, Romi Garduce

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Reds not the main problem

THE PROBLEM WITH GLORIA MACAPAGAL-Arroyo is that she has completely missed the point. She is fighting the communists now but they're not even the main issue. The main issue is the economy.

Another issue is the safety of ordinary citizens and journalists. Vigilantism is rampant in some parts of the country. Journalists have no protection. The gas prices are way up. The working class are overtaxed and underpaid. A lot of students are taking up nursing so they can escape this troubled country.

The country is hurting and what does GMA and her cohorts do? They create a scapegoat. The communist rebels are a symptom, not the problem. The problems are: corruption, poverty, too much politics, greed and lust for power.

The people already know that GMA cheated during the elections. She doesn't have to defend herself against this accusation. The people have already accepted it. All we want is for her to do her job and to do it well. After all, she obviously wants to be President so bad.

—GENIE HERMOSO, g_hermoso@yahoo.com

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LETTERS

Don't blame gov't for misfortunes

THIS IS A REACTION TO ARCHIE Relosa's letter titled "GMA deserves heckling from students." (PDI, 6/19/06) His disrespect for the President reveals much of his character. If I were him, I would look at the mirror and ask myself: What have I done for my country?

Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo might not be a perfect leader but she is giving her best to stabilize the republic and make it move forward.

As for the graduates, they should not wait for manna to drop from heaven. GMA is not a god with power to automatically provide each graduate with a job. Jobs are everywhere. One just needs to have the skills and proper training, hard work and patience to look for opportunities. My advice to Relosa:

(1) Work hard. (2) Don't blame the government or GMA for your misfortunes. (3) Have some respect for the President. No one is required to like or love her, but any sane mind should know that respect for others is a mark of a truly educated individual.

To my fellow Filipinos, our future is not in the hands of GMA or any government official. It is in our hands. In our own, individual ways, let's do good things. Put together, those good things will make for a great Philippines.

To borrow a line from a poem, "Be the best with whatever you are." Don't just be good at criticizing and disrespecting others when you yourself have not contributed anything for your own good, for your family and for your community. God bless the Philippines!

—RUELITO RIVAS,
Jakarta, Indonesia,
coolruel12@yahoo.com

Gov't silence on killings denounced

"THE GROANS OF THE DYING RISE from the city, and the souls of the wounded cry out for help..." Job 24:12

As an international NGO concerned with the dignity of each person, the Good Shepherd Congregation mourns and condemns the murder of Noli Capulong in Barangay Parian, Calamba City, Laguna. Capulong was a committed church worker of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP), a staunch advocate of justice and peace and a spokesperson for the Southern Tagalog Environmental Action Movement (STEAM).

He made valuable contributions to creating a climate of justice in the Philippines. Capulong's commitment to denounce the evil of his time and to criticize dehumanizing systems and structures earned the ire of some people in power who have been systematically carrying out extrajudicial killings as a way of silencing social activists.

The Good Shepherd NGO Office, representing members in over 60 countries, works for the promotion of life, human dignity and human rights; we seek a global peace based on social justice. It is in this context that we denounce the pattern of politically motivated killings in the Philippines in recent months. The Philippines has suffered a long history of violence and oppression. We repudiate the indifference and silence of the Philippine government in the face of all violence, especially violence committed against citizens whom the government is supposed to protect. We call on and join with all citizens of conscience, church workers, NGOs, academics, people of faith and the international Catholic Church to send a strong and clear message to the Arroyo administration: Stop the killings.

Stop the political repression. Punish all those responsible and those complicit in those murders with the full force of law. Have these killings investigated by a credible body, composed of people without vested interests, representing all sectors of society.

—CLARE NOLAN, NGO representative,
Congregation of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd; VANDANA LOBO, NGO intern, Congregation of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd, India/Nepal;
MAUREEN CATABIAN, NGO intern, Congregation of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd, Philippines,
211 East 43rd St., Room 302,
New York, NY 10017

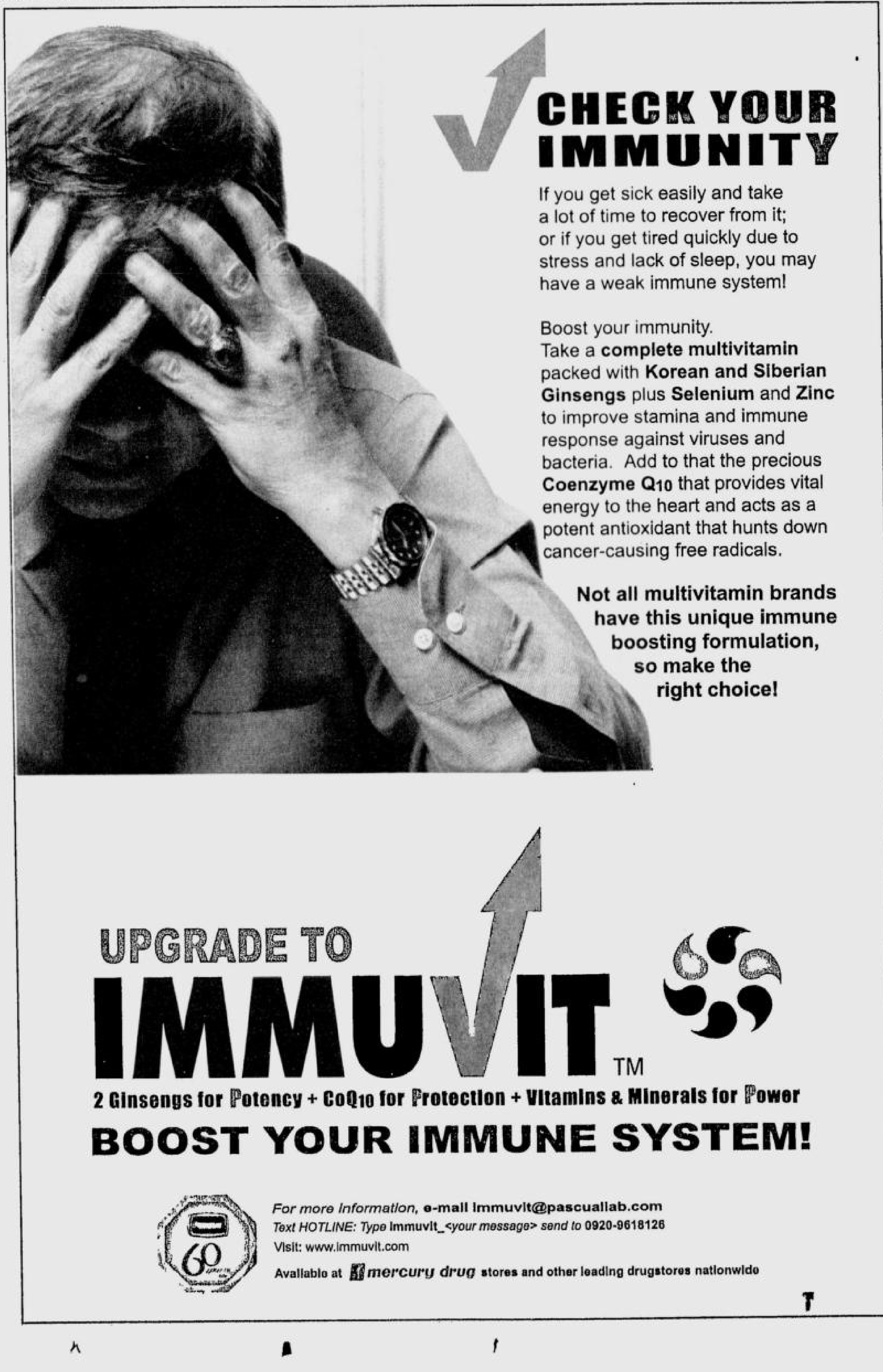
'The Ethics of What We Eat'

TINA SANTOS' REPORT ON ANIMAL cruelty in our local zoos, which was titled "They committed no crimes, why are they behind bars?" (PDI, 6/7/06) and Ambeth Ocampo's column "A clash of cultures on the table" (PDI, 6/7/06) call to mind the need for greater public awareness of the ethical treatment of animals and food ethics.

As Gilda Cordero Fernando said, we are humane to people, but this does not mean that we have all the right to be "inhumane" to animals, especially to those that give us sustenance. Food is not just something that we can ingest naturally without thinking. As Australian philosopher Peter Singer and American environmentalist Jim Mason pointed out in their recently published book titled "The Ethics of What We Eat," we need to make drastic changes on the way we think about animals and the food we eat.

More importantly, it is imperative that we make informed and ethical choices concerning the bits and pieces of beef, pork, poultry, seafood and game that we put into our mouths. After all, we are what we eat.

—MCANDREW CHUA,
23A Tantangara St.,
Duffy, ACT 2611, Australia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The great barrier who led us adrift

THE ARTICLE "RP IS CENTER OF marine biodiversity in the world" (PDI, 6/8/06) spoke of how our country is blessed as a cradle of marine biodiversity. While it made us every inch proud, we were taken aback by a statement of Elisea Gozun, supposedly an advocate of this country's environmental causes.

We doubt if the "environmental frontliners" deem Gozun fit to speak for them. We and our small fisherfolk partners surely don't. In 2003, as environment secretary, Gozun revoked Department Administrative Order No. 17. This order set the guidelines for delineating and delimiting municipal waters based on the archipelagic principle.

Such principle considers the uniqueness of the country as an archipelago and provides that municipal waters be measured from the farthest offshore island of a municipality. With that arrangement, the municipal waters and the rights of small fishermen were better protected, and various community-based coastal resource management (CBCRM) initiatives blossomed.

Gozun said, "Compared to other countries with similar coastal resources, the Philippines appears to be using its coastal resources in a very inefficient manner." Yes, this is true and we can't imagine how someone who has been instrumental in the disarray in coastal resource management initiatives and policies throughout the country could make such a statement without a tickling feeling on her tongue. Moreover, the civil society and fishery sectors are questioning her appointment as the NGO representative in the National Fishery and Aquatic Resource Management Council (NFARMC).

"We marvel at the Great Barrier Reef, but did you know that a group of some 100 scientists has said that the Philippines is the center of marine biodiversity in the world?" Gozun said.

Yes, we do marvel—but with Gozun's penchant for pleasing "whoever, whenever," someday the Philippines may be nothing compared to Australia's Great Barrier Reef. All we will have left is this great barrier who led us adrift.

—RONA LYN A. ALBARILLO,
information officer,
NGOs for Fisheries Reform,
59 C. Salvador St.,
Loyola Heights, Quezon City

Schools that promote indifference

I READ WITH INTEREST THE COLUMN "Catholic education" written by Michael L. Tan. (PDI, 6/9/06) He particularly cited Xavier School and St. Scholastica's. Indeed, both schools play an important role in making a better society by helping citizens pursue their vocations and fulfill them.

In my town Aparri, there is also this Catholic school, the Lyceum of Aparri, which is not only seriously committed to giving quality Catholic education to the youth of the north. It is also firmly involved in community-building. For instance, its school policies, mission statement, goals of its departments and even the lesson objectives on the lectures of teachers are consistent with the dogmas and teachings of the Catholic Church. A student here not only gets to be enlightened about the world, he is made to appreciate his being a Catholic.

But I know of some Catholic schools that are indifferent to social issues, thus producing students with little—if any—sense of social involvement.

For the school, a measure of the students' functional literacy is knowing the social issues of the day and discussing their possible solutions. Teachers and administrators see to it that the students get first-hand information about the poor and the neglected in society, the moral issues attached to *jueteng*, illegal fishing, graft and corruption and the like. Thus, students become aware of present-day social concerns and get to know the saving truth of the Gospel.

Catholic education has a lot to contribute to making a better society. It is most unfortunate, though, that there are some Catholic schools which remain passive or indifferent to social concerns. No wonder the graduates of these schools are also passive and indifferent. Indeed, most Catholic schools are mere learning institutions. Students who belong to affluent families are generally the ones who have access to these schools. Thus, the schools become "exclusive" in the real sense of the word, violating in the process Christ's command for all his disciples to "preach the good news to all nations."

The Catholic Church promotes "preferential option for the poor." Therefore, Catholic schools should not be blind to the needs of the poor and the marginalized in society. They should defend the poor against unscrupulous leaders, and educate all in the ways of truth and the saving grace of the Gospel.

—REGINALD B. TAMAYO,
member, Sangguniang Bayan,
Aparri, Cagayan

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Smuggling ring eyed in Subic killings

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

CAMP OLIVAS, PAMPANGA—THE NAME OF A former Bureau of Customs official has surfaced as among the possible suspects in the murders of a businessman and his aide at the Subic Bay Freeport on Friday, reports reaching the INQUIRER said.

A former official of the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority said the name of the former BoC official has cropped up in talks within the local business circles owing to that official's supposed business transactions with the slain businessman, Uldarico Tubig.

The victim worked as a broker for several companies selling used vehicles at the freeport.

Accounts by security guard Don Garin, a survivor in the 7 p.m. attack, showed that one of the gunmen was known to be a trusted man of the BoC official, the source said.

Investigators from the Central Luzon police have not yet included the BoC official in the list of suspects.

"We're still checking on that angle but it's unlikely because it's been long that they have not had a transaction," regional police director Chief Supt. Ismael Rafanan said on Sunday.

SBMA senior deputy director for operations Jose Calimlim said reports showed that Tubig, 45, used to work for the former BoC official. It was not yet clear if the official hired him to work at the BoC or in another business he was known to operate.

The INQUIRER had tried contacting the BoC official through his three mobile phones, but these were either turned off or out of coverage on Sunday.

A police investigator said the former BoC official should not be dragged in the case because he is being used as a cover by another set of suspects.

Tubig, according to the investigator, was a victim of a group that has wrestled control in the processing of imported cars through the freeport.

Tubig, described to be "good at moving papers at customs," was removed and later returned by that group when his replacement proved to be ineffective.

Taxes and duties paid for motor vehicles imported through or bought from companies at the freeport grossed P373.5 million from January to August in 2005, making these the second biggest revenue-earning items after oil for the BoC, a report from the agency showed.

The regional trial court branch 72 in Olongapo City issued on March 10, 2004, an injunction sought by the Motor Vehicles Importers Association against the implementation of Executive Order No. 156.

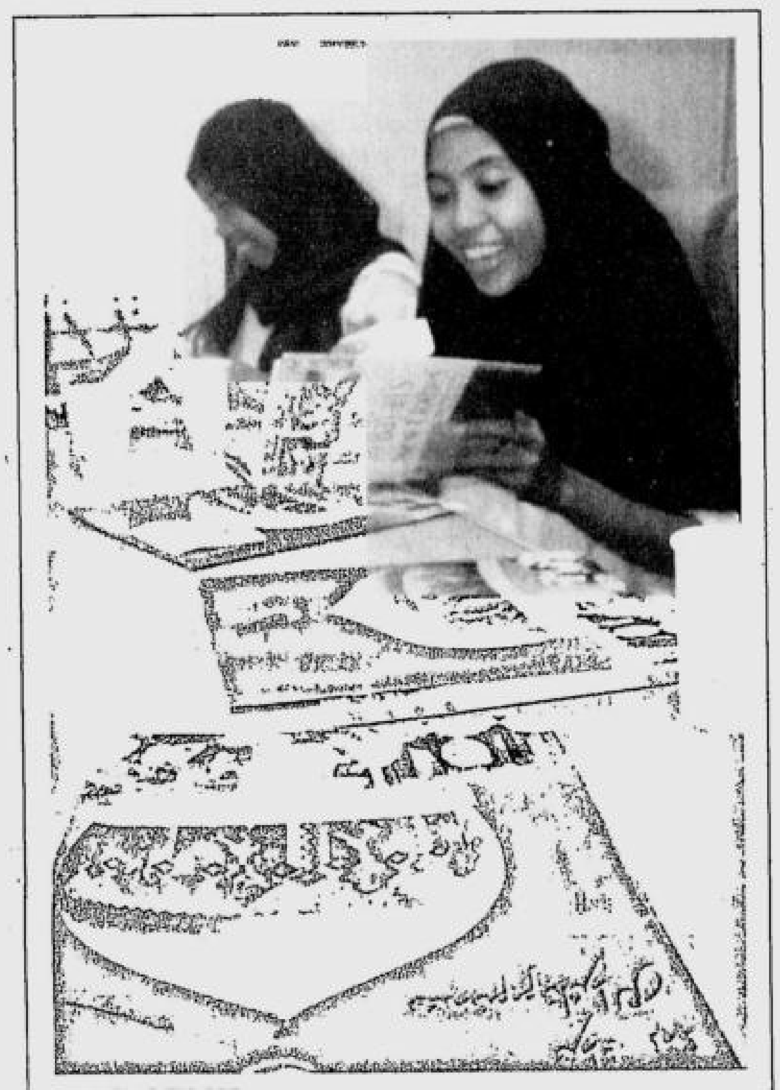
EO 156, which was issued on Dec. 12, 2002, banned the importation of all types of used motor vehicles, parts and components into Subic as part of a comprehensive industrial policy and directions for the government's motor vehicle development program.

The RTC ordered the Subic customs collector and the SBMA chair to allow the importation and entry of used motor vehicles, the Land Transportation Office to process the registration of the imported vehicles and "in general, to allow the unimpeded entry and importation of used motor vehicles to the Philippines subject only to the payment of the required customs duties."

The Court of Appeals in February last year affirmed the RTC decision and declared the EO unconstitutional and illegal.

The CA said only Congress can make such prohibition and it was not consistent with Republic Act No. 7227 or the base conversion and development law of 1992.

The Office of the Solicitor General filed a petition for review with the Supreme Court, where the case is pending.



GIFTS OF JOY TROY MALCOLM/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

Tausug students of Parang National High School read the books given to them during a brief tour aboard the US High Speed Vessel, which was anchored off the coast of Parang, Sulu. The seacraft transported medical equipment and medicines to the island despite the recent visit of the US Navy hospital ship USNS Mercy where thousands of patients were treated during a 3-week humanitarian mission in the Philippines.

Garments workers irked by watch of Palparan men

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—WORKERS OF A garments factory based at the Clark Special Economic Zone on Sunday got a taste of Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan's brand of military surveillance.

Ludynela Hamor, president of the Smart Shirts Philippines Inc. Union, said at least three soldiers questioned the caretaker of a school in Angeles City where they held a seminar on Sunday.

"We're holding a labor rights education seminar here and there are three soldiers at the gates but they're in civilians clothes. They have been asking a lot of questions about us and what we were doing here," Hamor told the INQUIRER by phone from the Pulung Bulo Elementary School in Angeles City, the venue of the activity.

"We think these soldiers have no reason asking about us or monitoring us because our assembly was legal. We're not doing anything bad here," Hamor said.

The school is located in Barangay Pulung Bulo, one of the 10 villages in the city where Palparan, commander of the Army's 7th Infantry Division, has deployed troops and set up detachments since three weeks ago to pursue communist rebels operating in urban areas.

Monitoring

Col. Ricardo Visaya, commander of the 69th Infantry Battalion operating in Angeles City, said his troops were monitoring all activities in their area.

"I will not deny the fact that the military in my area is monitoring all activities of the enemy," he said.

His battalion, he said, "concentrates its efforts on the plans, movements and locations of armed groups" while intelligence units "focus their work on left-leaning organizations."

"We have to do these so we can prevent them from doing things that can harm our economy and people. It's in the name of national interest," he said.

While the surveillance by the military on them was enough cause of concern, Hamor said the soldiers also behaved unprofessionally.

She said they were not in uniform and did not properly identify themselves. She said the soldiers also directed their questions to the caretaker of the school instead of confronting union leaders.

Citing her conversation with the caretaker who knew the soldiers, union leader Michelle Turla said the troops inquired about the activity, the group that organized it and the names of leaders behind it.

Hacienda Luisita

"*Akala taga*-Hacienda Luisita *kami* (The soldiers thought we were workers from Hacienda Luisita)," Turla said.

Hacienda Luisita is a vast sugar estate owned by the family of former President Corazon Aquino in Tarlac. More than 5,000 farm workers and industrial employees at the estate ended their yearlong agrarian and labor strike in November 2005.

The military continues to guard the estate. Palparan had said the estate remained a lair of the New People's Army.

"It was good that the caretaker knew us since we had been regularly holding forums here. He vouched that we were not bad elements," Turla said.

The soldiers kept watch from the gates but the 177 workers, most of them women, proceeded with the seminar where speakers from the Manggagawa para sa Kalayaan ng Bayan (Makabayan) discussed labor rights and the rudiments of how to negotiate with management.

Primo Amparo, Makabayan chair, said Palparan should be able to "teach his men to distinguish between legitimate organizations and armed groups."

"Seeing the two as one and the same won't achieve the goal of peace that this government wants to achieve," he said. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

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Tree cloning nursery promises lifeline for Cordillera's tree cover

By Delmar Cariño
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—THE COUNTRY'S most comprehensive tree cloning nursery opened here on June 24 with a lot of promise to help reforest the Cordillera and continue the lifeline of the region's fast vanishing tree varieties.

Environment Secretary Angelo Reyes was impressed with the cloning complex while an expert from the University of the Philippines at Los Baños (UPLB) hailed it as "better than the tree nurseries of other countries."

But it was Baguio City Mayor Braulio Yaranon who gave the facility its first assignment to clone a foreign tree.

Yaranon brought a young macadamia tree grown in a pot and some seedlings and asked the Department of Environment and Natural Resources here to clone it.

The P15-million complex sits on a 7,000-square-meter lot at the DENR compound in Pacdal here.

It houses the crucial structures needed for tree cloning—seed laboratory, tissue culture laboratory and a recovery unit that will need 10,000 gallons of water a day for the automatic mist sprayers that will run 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Dr. Mercedes Garcia, professor emeritus of biotechnology at UPLB, said the complex is not the first in the country "but [it is] the largest and most complete."

The complex is different, she said, as it aims not only to conduct experiments on tree tissues but also to mass-produce tree planting materials.

The Cordillera, she said, would benefit most from the complex as the region's genetically superior but endangered tree species "could be copied and produced through clonal propagation."

"Selected tree varieties could be chosen as the source of seed orchards," she said.

Garcia, the complex's consultant, said the country's forest resources are becoming "badly depleted due to logging and other detrimental human activities."

"Cloning is just a tool to produce numerous copies of selected trees," she said. "But the ultimate aim of cloning is the preservation of endemic and superior trees which are needed to protect biodiversity."

The complex was a component of the Itogon integrated watershed management program which the DENR committed for Itogon, Benguet.

But the facility was moved here because of some technical and physical requirements.

The first batch of trees to be cloned from the complex will be used to reforest Itogon's denuded forests, DENR officials said.

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Bicol intensifies drive against sea disasters

MASBATE CITY—THE PROVINCIAL government is intensifying its campaign to prevent sea tragedies in the storm-prone island-province to prevent a repeat of the recent MB Mae Ann sea tragedy, which took 28 lives at the height of tropical storm "Caloy."

A typhoon doctrine and saving-a-drowned-victim seminar was conducted here on June 20 by the Coast Guard District, Maritime Industry Authority (Marina), Philippine Ports Authority, Office of Civil Defense, Department of the Interior and Local Government, Regional Disaster Coordinating Council, Police Regional Office 5 and Naval Forces Southern Luzon.

The seminar taught 80 shipping lines owners, boat captains, barangay officials and rescuers about safety measures, typhoon doctrine and saving lives during a sea disaster.

"It's about time we refresh the minds of operators on safety and the passengers of their rights to minimize loss of lives and damage to properties," said Marina regional director Lucita Madarang.

Madarang said tarpaulin ads containing safety measures and reminders to the passengers would be placed in the 19 ports of Bicol this week.

Coast Guard District commander Capt. Luis Tuason Jr. said another common problem was the lack of designated holding areas with basic facilities for stranded passengers.

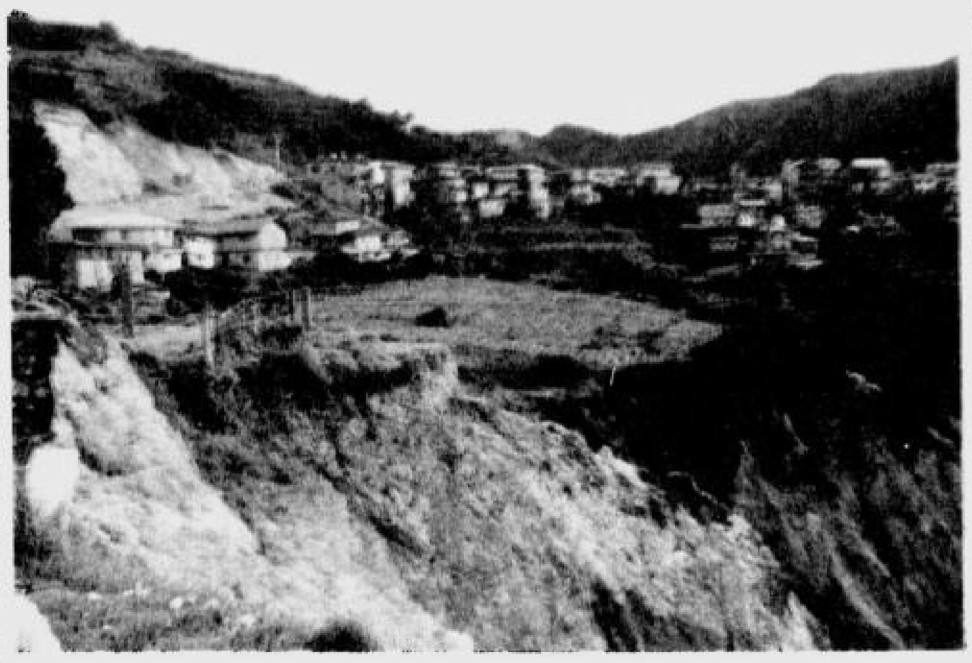
The passengers of the Mae Ann 5 had slept in the boat despite the raging waters brought about by the storm.

He said a similar seminar would be held on July 5 and a life guard training on July 4-6 in Sorsogon.

Vice Mayor Lilian Lim-Espinosa said the local government hoped to help provide information about the prevention of sea disasters.

Asked to assess the city's medical facilities, the vice mayor, who is also a doctor, admitted that the city lacked hospital facilities.

"The biggest hospital we have here has only secondary facilities. But in terms of skilled doctors, we have a good number of them in the province. What we need is a set of advanced medical equipment." *Ephraim Aguilar, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*



GEOHAZARD
Thundergods are often evoked by Ibaloi residents of Sinipsip village in vegetable-producing Buguias town in Benguet. Some of their homes are located on this dangerous precipice, which mildly strong rains could easily erode. EV ESPIRITU/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

Li & Fung fetes Filipino workforce on its 100th year

Hong Kong-headquartered Li & Fung Group Ltd. celebrated its 100th anniversary with a commitment to further strengthen its presence in the Philippines by nurturing both its business and its people.

Dr. Victor K. Fung, chairman of the multinational conglomerate, paid tribute to Li & Fung's close to 1,000-strong workforce in the Philippines, citing their vital role in the company's growth.

Her Excellency Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, President of the Republic of the Philippines, was the Guest of Honor and led the ceremonial toast along with Dr. Fung, IDS Group Managing Director Ben Chang, Li & Fung Limited Executive Vice President & Li & Fung Philippines Country Director William Ong, Li & Fung Philippines Vice President & Branch Manager Eliseo Miranda, and IDS Philippines President Vicente Dinglasan.

Aside from toasting to the success of the Li & Fung companies in the Philippines, they also welcomed the soon-to-be opened Toys 'R' Us store in Robinson's Galleria on July 1, which completes the full range of Li & Fung's operations in the Philippines.

President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo leading the ceremonial toast with Peter Favila, Dept of Trade & Industry Secretary and Dr. Victor K. Fung.

(Above) Dr. Victor K. Fung welcoming President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. (Below) Seated left to right are: Ben Chang, Group Managing Director IDS Group; William Ong, Exec Vice President Li & Fung Ltd. and Country Director Li & Fung Philippines; Dr Victor K. Fung, Li & Fung Chairman; President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo; Peter Favila, Dept. of Trade and Industry Secretary; Vicente Dinglasan, IDS Philippines President and Eliseo Miranda, Vice President & Branch Manager Li & Fung Philippines.

Mariano Que, Mercury Drug founder, attends the festivities. Joining him in photo are Dr. Victor K. Fung, Li & Fung Chairman, and Vicente Dinglasan, IDS Philippines President (standing).

The festive Filipiniana-themed celebration was part of a series of events being conducted by the Li & Fung Group in markets where it is present throughout the year to commemorate the last century and honor the people who have helped the company reach the historic milestone.

In the Philippines, Li & Fung (Phils.), Inc. is now one of the biggest export trading companies contributing to the country's dollar earnings and employment of Filipinos in the garment and general merchandise export industry.

IDS Logistics is the initial foray of IDS Group in the local market. Launched in 2002, it is now a major logistics services provider serving an impressive roster of mainly leading fast moving consumer goods (FMCG) companies. IDS Marketing was also launched in 2005 to be the group's sales and marketing services arm in the Philippines.

Dr. Victor K. Fung and other company executives shown together with the employees of Li & Fung and IDS who performed a special dance number during the event.

Standing from right to left wearing the Philippines national costume, Barong Tagalog, are: Vicente Dinglasan, President IDS Philippines; Joseph Phi, Regional Managing Director IDS Logistics; Ben Chang, Group Managing Director IDS Group; Dr. Victor K. Fung, Group Chairman Li & Fung Group; William Ong, Exec Vice President Li & Fung Ltd. & Country Director Li & Fung Philippines; Eli Miranda, Vice President & Branch Manager Li & Fung Philippines, Noel Bautista, Managing Director IDS Logistics Philippines and Jun Alli, Managing Director IDS Marketing Philippines (in the left third row partly hidden)

ROUNDUP

Woman, 3 kids die in fire

TAYABAS, Quezon—A woman and her three grandchildren died after their nipa hut in Barangay Lawigue was burned Wednesday. Fireman Leonardo del Mundo identified the victims as Lydia Guab, 56; Jeffrey Hinton, 6, and his two siblings Nicole, 4, and Vincent, 2. Del Mundo said the fire took place at about 2 p.m. but it was reported to their station about two hours later. "From the nearest road, we walked 2 more kilometers before we reached the site. The hut was already in ashes and the bodies of the victims were charred," the fireman said. Investigators found that Guab left the shanty to gather firewood after she started to boil cassava while the children were asleep. When she noticed the fire, she dashed back and went inside the burning hut to save the children but was unable to get out.
Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

CSC exam center request

CITY OF CALAPAN—The provincial board passed a resolution on June 19 requesting Civil Service Commission chair Karina Constantino David to reestablish a CSC examination center for Paper and Pencil Test, professional and subprofessional, in the province. The board observed that a significant number of Mindoreños were discouraged from taking the exams in Batangas because in addition to the P350 examination fee, they had to shoulder boat travel expenses.
Madonna Virola, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

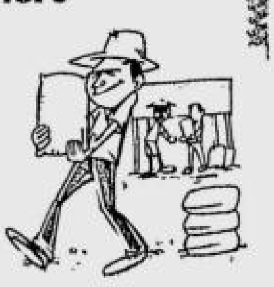
Soldier hurt in ambush

CALAMBA CITY—A soldier was wounded when 15 suspected New People's Army rebels ambushed government troops in Magdalena, Laguna on Friday. Brig. Gen. Roland Detabali, chief of the Army's 202nd Infantry Brigade based in Rizal, Laguna, said the wounded soldier identified as a certain Technical Sergeant Fernandez was immediately brought to a nearby hospital for treatment. He said Fernandez and seven other soldiers had just left their headquarters on board a truck when the rebels waylaid them in Barangay Baanan at around 4:45 p.m. A 15-minute gunfight raged until the rebels fled toward a mountainous area.
Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Robbery in band

LEGAZPI CITY—Seven unidentified men wearing bonnets, black sweat shirts, Army fatigue pants and slippers and armed with shotguns and pistols divested five jeepney passengers of cash and valuables in Barangay Pag-oring Nuevo in Libmanan, Camarines Sur on June 21. The gunmen fled in the same jeepney and upon reaching Barangay Pag-oring Nuevo proper, robbed the home of Joel Royales and Eden Cerillo of P55,000 cash, gold earrings and a cell phone. The robbers also took P20,000 from a cattle dealer. One of the robbers fired his shotgun before fleeing to Tangcong-baka in Libmanan.
Ephraim Aguilar, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Seeds for farmers



ILLUSTRATIONS BY A. MISTADES

CITY OF CALAPAN—The provincial government distributed about 100 sacks of certified seeds to more than 3,000 farmers heavily affected by tropical storm "Caloy." Instead of P880 per sack, each sack of seeds was bought by the provincial government at P730 and sold to farmers for only P440.
Madonna Virola, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

2 brothers drown

BACOLOD CITY—Two brothers, celebrating the St. John the Baptist feast with their family, drowned off the city's reclamation area at 9:45 a.m. on Saturday. Police identified the victims as Jonathan Grijaldo, 6, and his brother, John Rey, 4. Their mother, Ma. Cristina, said the family, who live at Purok Paghidaet Dos of 2nd Lacson Streets in Barangay 17, went swimming early morning. She said she got out of the water shortly before 9 a.m. but when she looked back, her sons were gone. The bodies of the two boys were recovered a few minutes later in the same place where their mother last saw them. They were declared dead when brought to the Corazon Locsin Montelibano Memorial Regional Hospital, police said.
Carla P.Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau

'Balanced' Cha-cha drive to start in Cotabato

COTABATO CITY—INSPIRED BY the initiative of the Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting to inform the public about the Arroyo administration's push for Charter change (Cha-cha), a similar approach has been conceived by the Catholic Church here which will start on July 1.

"It will be an open forum envisioned to raise the consciousness and knowledge of the people about the issues involved and its relation to our day-to-day life," said Fr. David Brocalla of the Our Lady of the Rosary parish.

President Macapagal-Arroyo and administration officials are steadfast in their conviction that a shift from a bicameral to a unicameral system of government via Cha-cha would come to pass through mass support.

Brocalla said the gathering would be open to all and will not engage Cha-cha proponents to a debate.

Speakers for and against Cha-cha have been invited in a no-holds-barred presentation. They may also answer queries from the audience, but there will be no debate or heated discussions, the priest stressed.

"As much as possible, we want a balanced presentation of issues and concerns surrounding Charter change and the effects it may bring to the country and the people," Brocalla said.

"As servants of God, it is imperative on us to guide our flock to a balanced and objective Cha-cha presentation with the hope that it will help them render a wise decision in the future," he added.

Recently, noted national figures like Sen. Francis Pangilinan and former Commission on Elections Chair Christian Monsod were here as resource persons on the controversial subject, on the invitation of the PPCRV.

2007 poll

In Cebu City, noted constitutionalist Fr. Joaquin Bernas believed that Charter change would not happen this year as he urged people to participate in the 2007 election.

"Let's prepare for the 2007 election. Participate in the 2007 election because the 2007 election can serve as referendum on the performance of the present government and let's make sure we vote properly during those elections," Bernas said in a radio interview on June 19.

Bernas is one of the framers of the 1987 Constitution and dean emeritus of the Ateneo de Manila College of Law.

Strong confidence

He was reacting to statements of Speaker Jose De Venecia who, in a visit here last weekend, expressed strong confidence that the Constitution would be amended before the end of the year.

"A number of things have to happen before that (shift in the form of government) can happen," Bernas said over dyLA station.

Bernas said Charter change proponents should face the fact that people's initiative had no legal basis for now because of the 1997 ruling of the Supreme Court declaring that this mode of amending the Constitution had no implementing guidelines.

He also stressed that people's initiative can only be used to amend the Constitution.

Changing the form of government, he said, is already a revision of the Constitution and this could only be done either through a Constitutional Convention (Con-con) or by Congress sitting as a Constituent Assembly (Con-ass).

Bernas said that since it appeared that both the Senate and the House of Representatives were not keen on calling for a Con-con, the most likely option is Con-ass.

However, he said, the possibility of the Senate and the House agreeing on the manner of proposed amendment of the Constitution appeared to be very difficult.

"On those premises, I doubt very much that we can achieve anything before the end of the year," Bernas said. *Charlie C. Señase, PDI Mindanao Bureau and Jhunnex Napallacan, PDI Visayas Bureau*

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Cops dig up remains of 4 suspected rebs in Butuan

BUTUAN CITY—POLICE EXhumed the remains of four suspected New People's Army (NPA) rebels believed to have been executed by their comrades as part of the group's continuing efforts to purge their ranks.

Chief Supt. Geary Lingan Barias, Caraga police chief, said the remains had been unearthed in two separate graves in known NPA bases in Nasipit, Agusan del Norte, and in Barangay Taligaman this city after they were tipped off by civilian informants.

Only two of the victims have been identified by their relatives, Barias said.

He identified them as Sonny Boy Plaza and Olong Mantilogco. They were executed for their supposed disloyalty and crimes against the movement, Barias alleged.

He condemned the alleged execution as a case of human rights violation.

He said he was convinced that there were still many mass graves in the region where the NPA presence is strong.

"Very soon, we will find them and exhume the victims' remains so their relatives can bury them decently," he said.

Mass graves had been unearthed in the past several years in Mindanao and other parts of the country, that many people believed contained the remains of alleged victims of the NPA purge.

The victims' families continue to seek justice. *Franklin A. Caliguid, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

CARAGA 'SYNDICATE'

Ombudsman probes NDF charges of illegal logging

BUTUAN CITY—THE OMBUDSman in Mindanao said it would investigate communist rebels' allegations that government and military officials were involved in rampant illegal logging activities in Caraga.

Earlier, Cesar Renerio, spokesperson of the National Democratic Front (NDF) in North-central Mindanao, said "a highly organized inter-agency protection ring" should be blamed for illegal logging in the region.

Renerio, in a statement sent to the media, named Benjamin Tumaliuan, director of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in Caraga, as the alleged leader of the protection ring, which also allegedly included officials from the National Bureau of Investigation, the police, and the military.

Tumaliuan has denied the allegations and challenged the communist-led NDF to present evidence.

"If they have complaints, they should lodge that in court so I can answer them," he said.

He dismissed the charges as "pure disinformation."

Renerio also named a Caraga governor and several mayors as protectors of illegal logging.

He said illegal logging had enriched those involved by at least P700 million during the past four years.

"The anomaly is the worst corruption scandal in the region," he said.

Ombudsman Mindanao spokesperson Marco Anacleto Buena said the investigation would focus on the NDF tip.

"The claim of the NDF is worth looking into. We don't care where the allegations came from," he said.

The Ombudsman acts on every tip it receives, he added. "We even conduct probe through letters sent by anonymous tipsters."

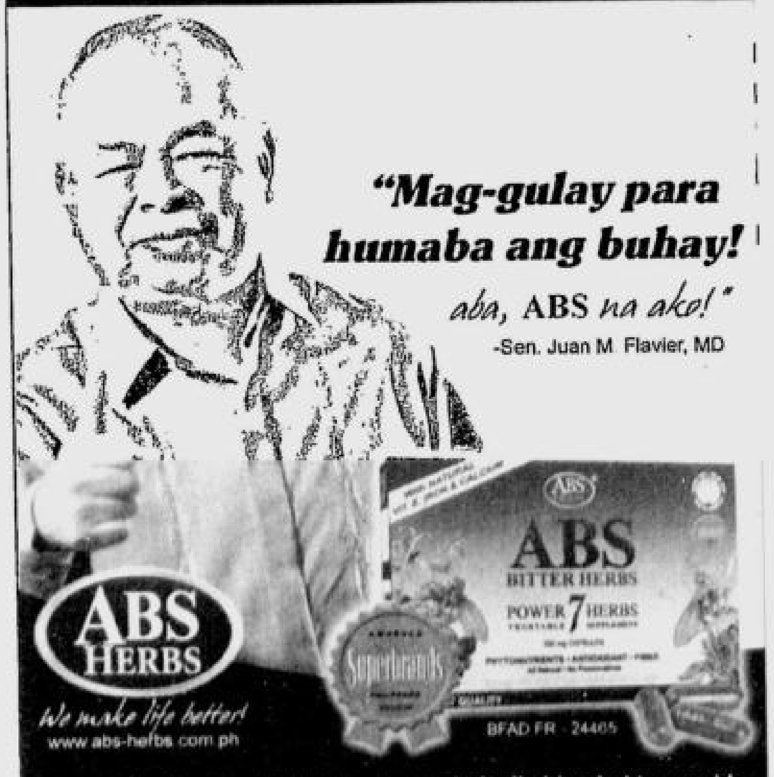
In Zamboanga City, an Army official and a sergeant were arrested in connection with the pilferage of ammunition inside the Army's Southern Command headquarters.

Southcom chief of staff Col. Antonio Supnet said Maj. Rauline Diploma, an ammunition officer and Sgt. Benido Damacino, a supply officer, were caught in possession of a large number of ammunition during a surprise inspection last week.

Diploma and Damacino are both assigned to the 9th Forward Service Support Unit of the Army Support Command.

"They had so many ammunitions in their possession other than what was regularly issued to them," Supnet said.

Supnet said Diploma's closet yielded an M-16 rifle and three .45 cal. pistols; 810 rounds of ammunition for .45 cal. pistol, and 200 rounds for Carbine rifle. *Franklin M. Caliguid and Julie S. Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau*



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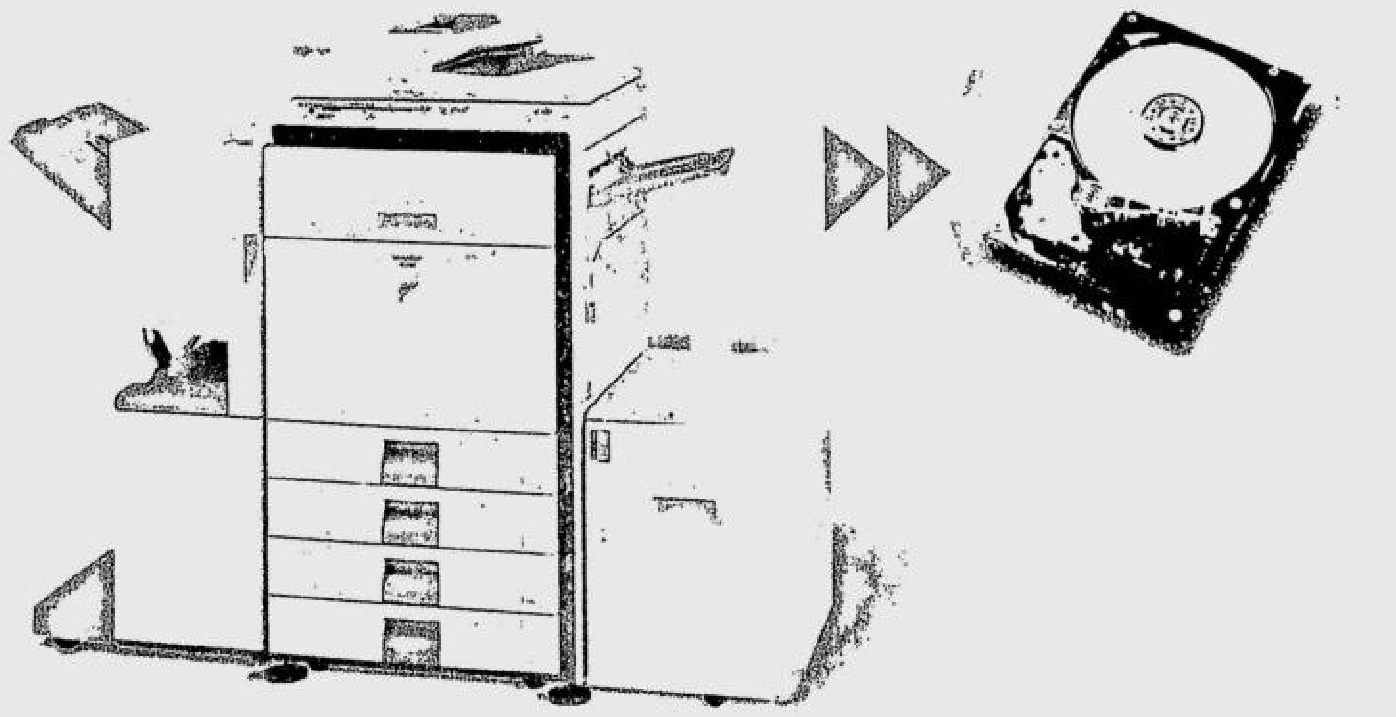

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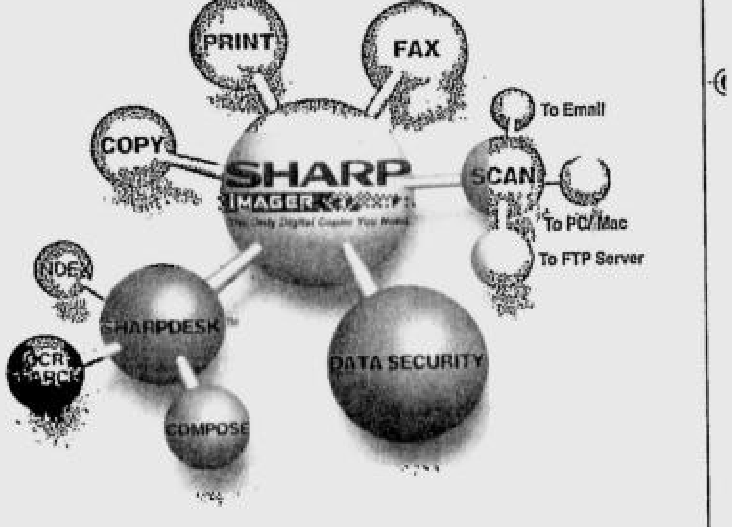

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OTHER people's trash is other people's gold. A junk shop operator assists children selling recyclable items for their school allowance at the old market site at La Trinidad, Benguet.

TOOTS SOBERANO/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

DENR won't charge towns without dumps

LA TRINIDAD, BENGUET—THE DEPARTMENT of Environment and Natural Resources is not inclined to impose sanctions on mayors whose towns have failed to establish solid waste management facilities as required by law.

Environment Secretary Angelo Reyes said the DENR understood the technical and financial obstacles faced by local governments in coming up with waste disposal programs.

The Ecological Solid Waste Management Act (Republic Act No. 9003) enacted in 2000 had given all towns until Feb. 16 to complete their waste management programs through waste segregation and the maintenance of materials recovery facilities, controlled dumps and sanitary landfills.

The law said local officials who failed to beat the deadline would be charged administratively.

Asked if the mayors who failed to comply with the requirements would be punished, Reyes said: "No. We will give them room because everybody is doing what they are supposed to do."

"We understand that it is late (the towns' compliance) and the DENR is also late in issuing the proper guidelines," he said.

While the law had set a deadline, Reyes said the towns just could not cough up the funds necessary to bankroll the completion of waste management facilities.

He cited as an example a sanitary landfill, which alone would cost P30 to P50 million, an amount many towns find higher than their annual income.

The DENR's failure to render technical assistance and issue on time the guidelines for the construction of waste facilities has also contributed much to the failure of local governments to comply with the law, he said.

Reyes said the country still has 794 open dumps and 304 controlled dumps that need to be converted into sanitary landfills.

He said another reason local governments cannot be faulted for non-compliance was the fact that they do not generate the volume of garbage needed for a sanitary landfill.

He said towns are classified according to their daily garbage production—15 tons and below (Class 1), 16-70 tons (Class 2), 71-200 tons (Class 3) and 201 tons and above (Class 4).

"There are those which cannot even be classified as Class 1," he said.

This situation, he said, would be a justified excuse for being unable to establish a sanitary landfill.

Reyes advised towns that generate less garbage to form a cluster and decide which town would host the sanitary landfill.

Emelita Aguinaldo, executive director of the DENR's National Solid Waste Management Commission, assured mayors of the commission's readiness to extend technical assistance to local governments. *Delmar Cariño, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Stop the Madness, Stop GMA's All Out War

Gloria Macapagal Arroyo has already done so much damage to our country. Political killings continue unabated with an alarming number of activists and journalists killed. Now she is out to aggravate the root causes of popular unrest with the strategy of all out war. This strategy has been tried before, but failed to bring peace to our troubled land. It violates human rights and leads to loss of lives. It is a systematic attack on all the democratic gains our people have fought for and achieved since the days of the dictatorship.

DOJ Secretary Raul Gonzales stated the obvious when he said that "collateral damage" is unavoidable in all out war. Civilians, especially leaders and active members of people's organizations, will bear the brunt of this strategy. Almost always, they are deemed suspects by the military as supporters of the armed guerrillas. The guerrillas have better chances of survival because they know how to elude and fight back when cornered, but the civilians are utterly vulnerable.

Peace is only possible where the demands of social justice are met. Instead of creating such an environment, the all out war strategy drives people to take up arms or support those who are organized for armed struggle. This is the lesson Marcos learned too late, a lesson his successors did not learn at all.

Allotting a billion pesos to an unreformed AFP will just line the pockets of crooked generals. The idealistic junior officers who are sincerely seeking to restore honor and heroism in their profession should try to stop this madness and unite with other democratic forces to oppose the fascistic trend of the Arroyo government.

We fully sympathize with the widows of Romulo Kintanar and Arturo Tabara in their private initiative to seek justice for their husbands, but we condemn the cynical use by the government of their cases to sow intrigues. Mrs. Kintanar filed an affidavit in 2003 and Mrs. Tabara in 2004, but the Department of Justice sat on their complaints until now, when it sees their propaganda value to cover up for the crimes of Gen. Palparan and blame the recent extra-judicial killings to internal conflicts on the Left.

However, we are dismayed by Jose Maria Sison's statement in the *Philippine Daily Inquirer* (June 17, 2006) justifying the NPA's killing of their former comrades Kintanar and Tabara as "acts of the revolution." Inadvertantly perhaps, Mr. Sison lends a semblance of credibility to the government's propaganda line that the Left is responsible for the spate of political murders.

Laban ng Masa upholds the principle that political differences and ideological disputes should be resolved through civilized and intelligent debates, not through the physical extermination of adversaries. #

June 23, 2006

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For members and others wanting to sign up please go to *Laban ng Masa* website at www.labanngmasa.org.

MA. ASUNCION Alviar, a nursing graduate of the Baguio Central University, leads nursing aspirants in defending a review center implicated in the alleged cheating during the recent board exams.
VINCENT CABREZA/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

Nurses split on board examination 'leakage'

By Vincent Cabreza
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—ALLEGATIONS OF TEST leakages during the recent licensing examinations for nurses have polarized members of the Philippine Nurses Association.

One PNA official called up deans of Baguio's nursing schools last week to urge them to suppress future complaints against the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) and examiners of its Board of Nursing, local PNA chapter members said in a meeting Thursday.

The school officials and chapter members from the Cordillera and Ilocos regions met to discuss legal options after agreeing to join the petition of 91 nursing graduates of Baguio universities that sought to place the examiners of the nursing board under preventive suspension.

Lawyer Cheryl Daytec-Yangot, counsel of the group and sister-in-law of one of the complainants, said they also wanted PRC to delay the release of the test results because of evidence that a nursing review center allegedly distributed documents that revealed the answers to the examinations here on June 11 and 12.

Florence Cawaon, a member of the nursing board last year and dean of the University of Baguio's College of Nursing, said the PNA was wary of a scandal because it would jeopardize negotiations to install an American licensing center in the country.

The affidavits of three of the 91 nursing graduates said examinees wearing jackets with the seal of R.A. Gapuz Review Center shared the documents with their seat-mates on the second exam day. They said the leaked answers proved to be genuine.

School officials said wearing the jackets already violated PRC rules.

Lawyer Roderick Salazar III, counsel for the review center, denied the allegations after they received text messages that implicated them. But he declined further comment until they received a copy of the petition.

Cawaon said the copy of the alleged examination leakage was unusual because the 18-page document was a handwritten outline that provided detailed answers to test questions.

The actual PRC test sheets ask examinees to select the answer from four or five letter options.

"To cheat, it would be simpler to just provide the letters [that correspond to the right answers], but the [alleged] leak is voluminous because it gives out detailed answers," she said.

Except for the fact that the document is handwritten, Cawaon said the alleged test leakage appears to follow the approved PRC test format.

She said she has inhibited herself from joining the PNA Baguio petition against the nursing board because of her PRC ties.

"I am confused right now because I don't know how [the leak] could have happened. It is impossible to smuggle out the questions because all members of the nursing board are sequestered during the nights the tests are conducted," she said.

"We are asked to house ourselves in a secure location, guarded by [National Bureau of Investigation agents] and each of us is tasked to give 300 questions to a test bank, where the final examination questions are selected and processed," Cawaon said.

"The selected questions are downloaded into computer disks that are sealed and carried personally by PRC examiners to exam sites all over the country accompanied by NBI escorts. "They cannot access the questions until PRC releases passwords simultaneously so they can print out the test manuals before they are distributed to examinees."

Swindlers victimize moms of 2 OFWs via cell phones

SORSOGON CITY—IT IS AN OLD modus operandi, but two mothers of overseas Filipino workers still fell prey to swindlers.

It started with a phone call to the unsuspecting mother from someone who introduced himself as an ambassador of the Philippines to a foreign country and was informing her about a tragedy that befell her son.

That was all that Remy Dechavez, an employee at the Sorsogon Provincial Hospital, had to hear and thereafter fell under the swindler's spell.

Dechavez recounted that a certain "Ambassador Roilo Golez" informed her on June 13 that her son got into trouble with a co-worker and accidentally killed the latter.

However, embassy personnel were able to spirit him out of the country and was now in Cebu under the care of a doctor who would be contacting her within the day.

Subsequently, a certain Dr. Sison called her up and informed her that her son was in Cebu and that he was injured but in stable condition, only that he needed to undergo emergency operation which entailed a big amount of money.

She was asked to send P80,000 through "Smart Money Padala" but that she must not inform anyone, especially the authorities, otherwise her son's whereabouts would be traced and he would be arrested.

The police were already alerted by the family of her son's co-workers even as they spoke, she was told.

Thinking only of the safety of her son, Dechavez hurriedly withdrew the amount and immediately sent them to Smart card Nos. 5577515763803102 and 5577515770615101, the numbers given by the suspects.

After sending the money, the doctor called her up again telling her to dispose of all transaction records so that no evidence could be traced to her.

That was the last time she heard from the suspects.

Only when she told one of her daughters about the story did she realize that she had been victimized.

Earlier, a retired employee of the same hospital, who requested anonymity, lost P100,000 to swindlers in the same manner.

Much earlier, hospital guard Manuel Ignacio and a retired teacher who refused to be named lost P50,000 and P80,000 respectively, under similar circumstances. *Bobby Q. Labalan, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

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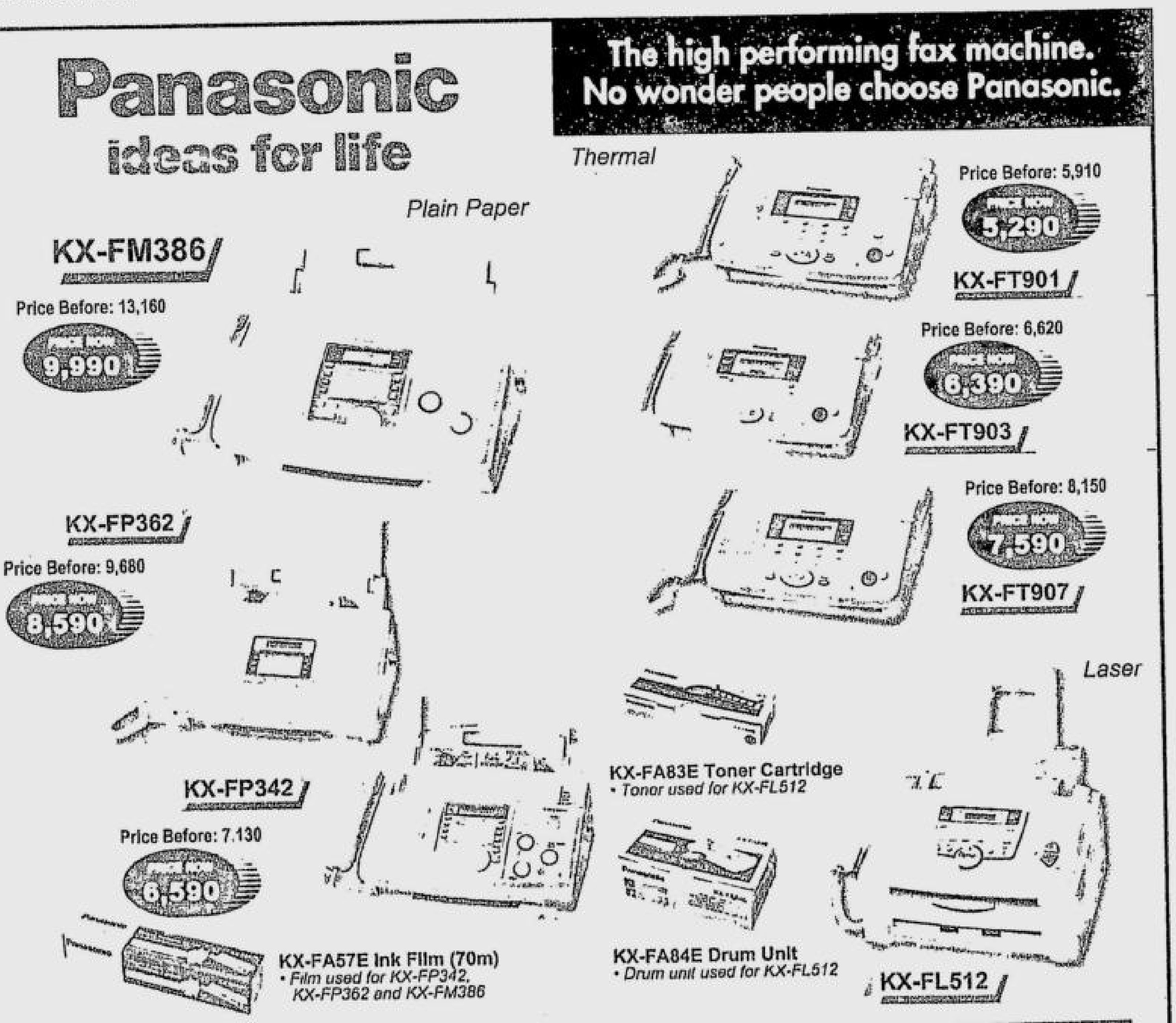

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Multiracial friendship in every corner of Germany

By Arlyn dela Cruz
Contributor

BERLIN—IT IS MORE THAN JUST a world craze for football. It is also about various races making friends. That's what is taking place in every corner of Germany right now.

Reading about hooliganism among fans even before one actually sees a game could produce a lot of misconceptions about the current World Cup matches.

The warning from our cultural guide to be careful because fans could really be unruly added to an initial decision to stay away from the games.

But how could one stay away when the magic of the games was all around you, was in almost every corner of the streets of Germany, Berlin in particular?

While some may not be able to accept the World Cup as just a game, the larger picture on the ground is one of camaraderie among fans coming from around the globe.

Bonding everywhere

It is a common sight in the streets of Germany to see people of different races snapping pictures of each other.

At the former Checkpoint Charlie, Ecuadorians pose for pictures with South Korean tourists. In an Italian restaurant near the famous Brandenburg gate, a group of fans from Argentina sits with a group of Brazilians, bantering about how they expect to see each other in the finals.

Japanese with German flag

I met a lone Japanese tourist and he was not carrying his country's flag. Instead, he was waving Germany's flag of black, red and yellow. I asked him about it and he said: "Germans will make it to the finals!"

The fans of England, for sure, have a different dream.

I made new sets of friends, apart from the members of my class at DW-Akademie, by just walking down the streets of Berlin. The new friends are from Ecuador, France, Sweden, South Korea and Japan.

Love for the game

People from countries not playing in this year's World Cup are just here for the love of the game—Ethiopians, Thais, Malaysians, Indonesians, Egyptians and musicians from an Indian tribe on the border of Mexico and the United States.

Mixing my English with my stock knowledge of Spanish has taken me far.

Even the very aloof Mr. Hefting, who manages the condominium we are staying in, agreed to have his picture taken with us, all in the spirit of the World Cup.

Suddenly friendly Germans

Germans whom we regularly meet on the street but who don't even throw our group a glance have become friendly. Now, they don't just give us a warm smile. They also initiate conversations.

Saleswomen and cashiers who usually say "Only Deutsche" now speak English. Even train stations now have English translations for the various stops—all because of the World Cup.

The real story so far is that while there is an outpouring of support from fans of countries competing for the Cup, no major trouble related to the games has occurred. But that may be getting ahead of myself because the finals are still days away.

The other mission

The presence of many policemen is a constant reminder that while the atmosphere remains festive, a riot among fans could break out anytime.

For now, the World Cup is living up to its other mission: To provide people with opportunities to make friends from all over the world.

And I have made new ones—not to be kept merely in photographs in an album but as lifelong, treasured friends from across the seas.

Filipinos out in the cold amid World Cup fever

From page A1

fan as he left a restaurant.

"The joy of the World Cup is watching 32 nations, most times playing by the rules, bringing the planet together," writes the veteran British writer Sean Wilsey. "Men paint themselves their na[illegible]al colors and cry openly at op[illegible]ing victories."

Eye-opener to Pinoys

A visit to Nuremberg two days after the June 9 Munich opener for the lightweight Mexico-Iran group match was an eye-opener. On the eve of the game, the city's medieval district teemed with tens of thousands of Mexican and Iranian fans, most of them without tickets to the game. They were there to party for country's sake and not much else.

A group of Filipino journalists stepping out of the awe-inspiring 14th-century Church of the Our Lady in the morning of the Sunday match was greeted by a man who looked like he hadn't had a wink all night.

"Did you pray for Mexico?" he asked quite excitedly.

"Yes, we did," the group replied as one, hoping that would elicit a "thank you" smile.

"Mexico needs it more, ha! ha!" said the man, Saud Hakim Azare, a London-based Iranian engineer whose family still lives in the Islamic Republic of Iran's Isfahan province.

Hitler's grandstand

The scene around Nuremberg's Frankenstadion before, during and after the match was boisterous but amazingly well below the criterion for hooliganism.

In the eerie shadows of the Nazi-era Reichparteitagsgelande, the 300-meter-long Nazi party rally grandstand—where Adolf Hitler reviewed marches-past as he fanned the flames of World War II—uproarious, inebriated fans turned the grounds near the World Cup stadium into a sea of green, red and white, the national colors of both Mexico and Iran.

There might have been scalpers in the throng but they were very discreet. No one wanted to part with his 200-euro (about $240) computerized ticket for offers as high as 1,000 euros, according to a report in the newspaper Die Welt.

'The tickets are my life'

Ticket controls were, well, originally stringent. When the Fifa (Fédération Internationale de Football Association) organizers received a report that a block of 500 tickets to the Netherlands-Serbia and Montenegro match were lost in transit, they quickly canceled the tickets' serial numbers. Woe to the fanatic who got hold of one in the street.

Osvaldo Muñoz, draped in the red-blue-white Costa Rican flag in Munich's gleaming, 66,000-seat stadium, saved "a fortune" so he could watch all his country's three matches in the group elimination stage.

The Costa Rican shop owner paid 900 euros for his tickets, which he lovingly kept in a brown leather envelop hanging on a string around his beer-reddened neck.

"The tickets are my life here," Muñoz said as he queued to deflate his bladder of German brew that flowed from the stadium's refreshment stalls for 5 euros—$6.33 or roughly P336—a plastic cup.

"Ticket sharks, thieves, they're like plagues here," he said.

An embarrassment

But all hell broke loose a week into the World Cup, in Germany and elsewhere. A ranking Fifa official from Botswana was caught selling 12 tickets to the England-Trinidad and Tobago match for three times their face value, deeply embarrassing the federation.

Ismail Bhamjee, a member of the powerful 25-member Fifa Executive Committee, was forced to resign from all Cup-related duties and ordered to leave Germany immediately.

In Britain last week, police arrested a man and a woman for duping hundreds of children who were turned away when bogus agencies failed to come up with their tickets to another match involving England, according to an Associated Press report.

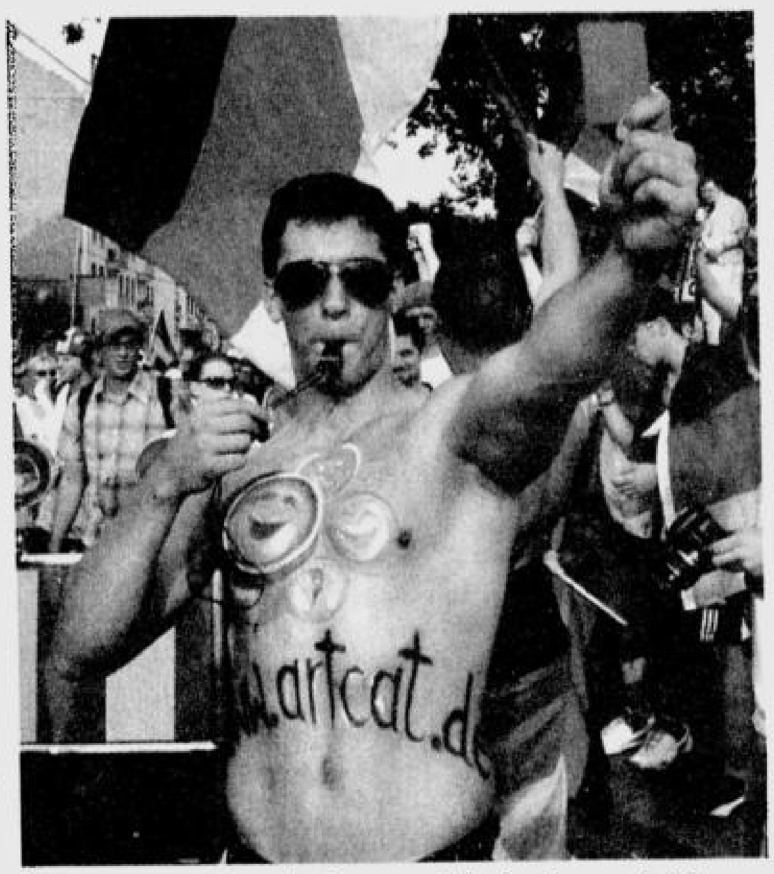
Moved by an appeal from British Prime Minister Tony Blair, however, Fifa president Sepp Blatter rustled up 350 tickets to a third England match.

Tickets for free

German organizers promised before the World Cup they would stamp out scalping. Plans, they said, were fool-proof: Tickets contained a microchip and were registered to individuals so that fans who went through the turnstiles would have to match up with their tickets.

Still, tickets can be had for free—after the game, of course, and for posterity.

An English-speaking German and a Ghanaian vied for fans' attention as they headed to the long walkway that led to the hospitality hall of primary Cup sponsor adidas in Munich's Frottmaning section.



GERMAN fans celebrate in the streets following Germany's 2-0 defeat of Sweden in a knockout match. AFP

Huge demand for tickets

"Don't throw away your tickets, I collect them," the Ghanaian scrawled on a piece of cardboard he was holding up.

The demand for tickets was phenomenal. According to a briefing, no less than three million fans—buying 30 million tickets—would have seen the matches in the 12 German stadiums by July 9.

The nearest Filipinos came to seeing World Cup football in all its glory was when South Korea and Japan co-hosted the 2004 edition—the first time the event was held in Asia.

Police visibility was substantial in and around the stadiums, at least in Munich and Nuremberg, alert to even the most innocuous signs of trouble. One German fan seen lighting a little sparkler in the stands was approached and politely told to defuse it.

Big 'fusbol' fans, too

For a country that maintains Bundeswehr troops in such global hot spots as the Balkans and Afghanistan, securing the venues from troublemakers is paramount. After all, the Fifa World Cup opened the day after US smart bombs killed Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, the anti-Western leader of al-Qaida in Iraq.

But German policemen, like their countrymen, were big fans of fusbol as well. Small groups of foreign fans crowded around the friendly Walther pistol-packing security men to have their pictures taken, like circus clowns frolicking next to placid bears.

32 billion viewers

And Germany's friendly face was understandably ubiquitous. The 64 matches are expected to draw a conservative TV audience of about 32 billion across the globe, giving the world's third largest economy its biggest stage to show off its hospitality.

"The slogan we selected as the official motto of the 2006 Fifa World Cup, 'A time to make friends,' represents a great challenge," said the great Franz Beckenbauer, hero of Germany's 1974 champion team and president of the organizing committee.

"Naturally, this World Cup is primarily meant to be a festival of football. The World Cup is in the best of hands."

More than 40,000 candidates from all over the world applied for the required 15,000 slots as voluntary helpers for the tournament.

Demanding challenge

"The general conditions which apply to the 2006 Fifa World Cup have assumed dimensions which would have been inconceivable when Germany first hosted the tournament in 1974," said Horst R. Schmidt, SVP of the organizing committee.

"More matches, more match days, more stadiums, more fans—the increase in these core areas adds up to a highly demanding organizational challenge."

After all, this was the first Fifa World Cup to be held in Germany after the typhoon of democracy swept the cold, taut frontiers of communist Eastern Europe and toppled the Berlin Wall in the fall of 1989.

As it is big business for German partner firms in the World Cup, they, too, need to be visible at all venues.

The German sportswear giant adidas provided the new-generation competition ball, called "Teamgeist" or teamwork, as well as the uniforms of six squads, including host Germany. The firm alone predicts sales of spiked shoes and other football products to exceed $2.4 billion.

All-out war on Reds makes death …

From page A1

ing press reports of her visits will help her reverse the slump in her approval rating and popularity among the Filipino people remains problematic. Her previous visits had not lifted her ratings.

Our record of human rights violations has received a heavy battering in Western Europe more than in the United States, which has also called the attention of the Arroyo administration to its increasing resort to arbitrary state powers to deal with the protest movement during the past two years.

Repairing battered image

The President defined the objective of her trip, i.e., to repair the battered image of her government on respect for human rights, when she signed Republic Act No. 9346 abolishing the death penalty.

"When I meet the Holy Father soon in the Vatican, I shall tell him that we have acted in the name of life for a world of peace and harmony," she said, on signing the measure.

At the same time, she could not escape the contradiction that as she prepared to leave, she had just declared a "total war" to crush the communist movement in two years. And she was haunted by the fact that, since 2001, more than 200 unarmed political militants of the Left had died in extrajudicial executions.

Forked tongue

In trying to reconcile the incompatibility between her mailed-fist policy toward the leftists and her claim that the new law stood to strengthen the culture of life, the President said:

"We have taken a strong hand against the threats [to] the law and the Republic, but at the same time we yield to the high moral imperatives dictated by God to walk away from capital punishment … We shall continue to devote the increasing weight of our resources to the prevention and control of serious crimes, rather than take the lives of those who commit them."

The President was speaking with a forked tongue, and her statement is certain to be greeted with disbelief and skepticism by the Europeans.

Contradictory policies

And so, while the new law takes out from the state the burden of carrying out legal executions, the "all-out" war on the 37-year-old insurgency unleashes a state policy of violence, leaving security forces an ample latitude to commit extralegal and summary executions, without due process.

The incompatibility of these two contradictory state policies is even more underlined by the fact that the government has been impotent in identifying, bringing charges and putting to trial those responsible for the extralegal executions perpetrated by paramilitary death squads, alleged to be backed by security forces.

The new legislation is one of the few laws passed during the second term of the President with multiparty support in Congress. The European Union and the Vatican applauded the abolition of capital punishment.

Winning Vatican goodwill

The Philippine government came under EU pressure to abolish it after Congress restored the death penalty in 1993 for heinous crimes, such as murder, child rape and kidnapping although the Philippine Constitution had abolished it.

The papal nuncio in Manila, Archbishop Fernando Filoni, said the signing of the law "could be another very important nice step to go on in showing that the culture of life is very alive and important in this country."

The importance of the Vatican's goodwill is emphasized by the fact that the President brought with her an unusually large entourage, composed mainly of representatives of Catholic Church groups, and that the main focus of the trip is the audience with Pope Benedict XVI.

Offer of appeasement

Ms Arroyo undertakes this diplomatic offensive against a strong blast of criticism from a number of European-based human rights organizations, among them Amnesty International and Reporters without Frontiers, which have denounced the mounting toll of unpunished killings of political militants and journalists.

Amnesty and the Philippine Commission on Human Rights have held the government responsible for the killings through fostering a "culture of impunity" by not putting a stop to the assassinations.

The President is bringing the new law with her as an offering of appeasement of European opinion that is important for maintaining the democratic credentials of this government.

These credentials have been increasingly questioned in the wake of the government's declaration of national emergency in February that called in the army and police to raid a media organization and to make summary arrests.

Seeing through GMA

But this offering is inadequate. It covers only one aspect of human rights—that concerning legal execution of convicted criminals.

It glosses over the issue of extralegal executions by anonymous death squads in the course of the intensifying counterinsurgency military campaign.

The gods of European public opinion that Ms Arroyo is seeking to please are not easy to appease.

They can see through the fraud and the hypocrisy of the smoke produced by the incense, while slaughter is taking place in the fields of counterinsurgency operations.

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RP priest reelected SVD head

From page A1

making him the first Filipino and the first Asian to hold this key position in a congregation that used to be dominated by Europeans. Since its founding in 1875, the SVD has had seven Germans and one American for superior generals.

One of the highlights of Pernia's first term was the canonization of both the SVD founder, Arnold Janssen, and the congregation's first missionary, Joseph Freinademetz, according to Flores.

During the same period, Pernia also promoted SVD's decentralization into continental zones. He pushed for the recognition of the SVD as a nongovernment organization at the United Nations and paved the way for the acceptance of new mission territories in Chad and South Africa.

As superior general, Pernia heads an international congregation of 6,102 priests and brothers. The SVD is the seventh biggest male religious congregation worldwide after the Jesuits, Salesians, Franciscans, Capuchins, Benedictines and Dominicans.

Although based in Rome, Pernia's work entails a lot of travelling, visiting SVD missions all over the world.

"I know he's tired for he's been in that post for the past six years, but I also know that he's happy to continue serving," said Ernesto Pernia, elder brother of the prelate and economics professor at the University of the Philippines' School of Economics.

When Pernia became superior general, he was said to be the SVD leader at the threshold of the new millennium, also known as the age of the Asian church. A total of 3,260 Asians account for more than half of the SVD membership today. Indonesians make up the biggest national group within the SVD, followed by Indians, Poles, Filipinos and Germans.

New paradigm

In the Philippines, there are about 500 SVD priests and brothers, most of them deployed in mission posts and universities, like the University of San Carlos in Cebu, Liceo del Verbo Divino (formerly Divine Word University of Tacloban), Divine Word College in the cities of Legazpi, Laoag and San Jose, and other Catholic high schools.

The SVD's main work as envisioned by St. Arnold Janssen is to spread the Gospel or "the Divine Word" where it is not taught sufficiently or not at all through active ministry, publishing and running Catholic schools.

In an earlier interview with the INQUIRER, Pernia said one of the important challenges of the SVD today was "how to promote diversity and maintain unity in the society."

In his report to confreres gathered in Rome to plan for the next six years, he also spoke of a "new mission paradigm" that calls for changes in doing missionary work.

"In the past, SVD mission meant largely bush mission, rural parishes, and city schools," he said. "Now, SVD mission includes a variety of activities—street children, people living with HIV/AIDS, migrants, refugees, urban parishes, Bible apostolate, communications ministry, interreligious dialogue, etc."

These ideas and convictions of Pernia are best concretized in his approach called the "prophetic dialogue" with so-called "faith-seekers." These are people who have no community of faith, the poor and marginalized sectors, those of different Christian churches, followers of other religious traditions, and people committed to diverse ideologies, according to Flores.

Active nonviolence

At the heart and soul of Pernia's approach to missionary work is active nonviolence as a means for change.

The seed for this conviction was planted during Pernia's seminary days in the turbulent 1970s when the dictator Ferdinand Marcos ruled through martial law. Pernia was then president of the student body of the Divine Word Seminary. Seminarians were active in the social apostolate for the poor and were involved in the Federation of Free Farmers.

In their struggle with the poor, some SVD seminarians and priests eventually became Communist Party of the Philippines members and supporters, among them the late Conrado Balweg and Edicio de la Torre.

Pernia remained on the moderate side, convinced that a just and humane society could be achieved only through active nonviolence—not through an armed struggle. His MA thesis in philosophy, which won him top honors, was titled "The Young Marx: A Humanist Conception of History."

PERNIA

The aims of the prophetic dialogue that Pernia espouses include spreading the Divine Word, promotion of human development, and the learning from and sharing "in the diversity of gifts given by the God of Life."

It has been a long and difficult journey for Pernia.

Pernia was born in Tagbilaran City on Jan. 2, 1949. His parents, the late Dr. Juan C. Pernia and Petra del Mar, had two sons who entered the priesthood.

Pernia is the youngest of seven sons, the eighth among nine siblings. Ernesto Pernia said his younger brother was "a very cheerful, helpful boy" and a consistent achiever—" at the top of his class since kindergarten."

Pernia had his elementary schooling at the Holy Spirit School run by the SSpS Sisters in Tagbilaran. In 1961, he entered the SVD minor seminary at the University of San Carlos Boys High School in Cebu City and eventually moved on to Christ the King Mission Seminary in Quezon City.

Pernia has a cosmopolitan outlook, having studied in Rome and acquired a knowledge of foreign languages. He earned a doctoral degree in fundamental theology at the Gregorian University in Rome.

In form and in substance, Pernia is the quintessence of the new missionary facing the old religious challenge of being "in the world" without being "of the world."

Manila Water

Upgrading of pipelines to cause temporary water interruption in portion of Pasig City

Manila Water is currently undertaking an aggressive capital expenditure program to improve the distribution of water in the East Zone. In line with this, the company will install an electromagnetic flowmeter on a large pipeline along San Miguel Avenue corner Julia Vargas which will result in a temporary shut off of the Pasig Pumping Station. The interruption will begin 10:00 p.m., Tuesday, June 27, 2006, up to 4:00 a.m., Wednesday, June 28. The following barangays will be affected: Ortigas Center, San Antonio, Kapitolyo, Oranbo, Ortigas Avenue, Valle Verde 4 and 6, portion of Bagong Ilog (Kawilihan) and Pineda.

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(PDI – June 26, 2006)

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Item No.	Description	Location	Minimum / Floor Price
06-1	259.7 sqm residential lot	No. 12 Rimas St., Proj 2, Q.C.	P 2,428,195.00
06-2	4 residential lots 300 sqm each	Bgy Pimienta, Umingan, Pangasinan	P 455,855.00
06-3	2 residential lots 500 sqm each	Bgy Prado, Umingan, Pangasinan	P 243,600.00
06-4	9,448 sqm Industrial Lot	Bulacan Agro Industrial Subdivision Calumpit, Bulacan	P 30,516,700.00
06-5	367 sqm residential lot	L12, B6, Snra. De la Paz Subd. Sumulong, Antipolo	P 892,500.00
06-6	House & Lot F/A 152 sqm L/A 208 sqm	L22, B24, Phase II, Soldier's Hills Subd., Muntinlupa City	P 707,200.00
06-7	3,000 sqm residential lot 13,000 sqm agri lot	Bgy. Canimog, Romblon, Romblon	P 1,538,310.00
06-8	House & Lot F/A 42 sqm L/A 120 sqm	L45 & 47, B4, Alpha Street Northmatrixville Subd., Caloocan	P 509,320.00
06-9	322 sqm residential lot	L70, B1-A Diamond Heights Victoria Homes, Muntinlupa City	P 547,400.00
06-10	House & Lot F/A 142 sqm L/A 134 sqm	Sapang Palay, San Jose del Monte, Bulacan	P 346,239.21
06-11	House & Lot F/A 138 sqm L/A 143 sqm	B7, L3, North Matrixvile, Camarin Rd., Caloocan City	P 963,007.50
06-12	House & Lot F/A 618.98 sqm L/A 2,607 sqm	29 Sunflower Dr, Beverly Hills, Taytay, Rizal	P 7,081,592.76
06-14	294 sqm Residential Lot	B3, L8, Filinvest, Bgy Silangan, Capitol, Quezon City	P 1,374,450.00
06-15	278,369 sqm raw land with CARP Exemption	Bgy Sulpok, Tanauan, Batangas	P 350.00 / sqm
06-16	188,351 sqm raw land with CARP Exemption	Bgy Malaking Pulo, Tanauan, Batangas	P 350.00 / sqm
06-17	106,073 sqm raw land with CARP Exemption	Bgy Dona Jacoba, Tanauan, Batangas	P 350.00 / sqm
06-18	35,138 sqm raw land with CARP Exemption	Bgy Suplang, Tanauan, Batangas	P 350.00 / sqm
06 -19	450,000 sqm raw land with DAR Conversion	Bgy Batas, Silang, Cavite (beside Riviera Golf & Sports Club)	P 800.00 / sqm
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06-21	132,189 sqm residential raw land	Bgy Mapalad, Sta. Rosa, Nueva Ecija (near Fort Magsaysay)	P 400 / sqm
06- 22	17,996 sqm commercial lot	Acharon Blvd., General Santos City	P 17,000.00 / sqm
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06-25	6,465 sqm commercial lot	Acharon Blvd., General Santos City	P 17,000.00 / sqm
06-26	2,291 sqm commercial lot (not contiguous)	Acharon Blvd., General Santos City	P 15,000.00 / sqm

Interested bidders may obtain bidding documents starting June 26, 2006 upon payment of non-refundable fee of P500.00 from the Property Management Office, 3/F, RSBS Bldg., Camp Aguinaldo, Q.C.

A Pre-Bidding Conference is scheduled on July 5, 2006 at 10:00 AM, Central Meeting Room A, RSBS, Camp Aguinaldo, Q.C.

Bids will be opened in the presence of bidders or their representatives on July 10, 2006 at 10:00 AM at the Central Meeting Room A, RSBS, Camp Aguinaldo, Q.C.

For further inquiries, you can call MS. LIZA HIZON or MR. DARWIN MANZANO at telephone numbers 9124718 or 9114071 local 249.

(PDI - June 24, 25 & 26, 2006)

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THIS IS THE LIFE JOAN BONDOC
Armed Forces of the Philippines Chief of Staff Gen. Generoso Senga gambols on the beach of Kalayaan Island in the Spratly group of islands off Palawan which are being contested by the Philippines and other Asian nations. Senga visited the Filipino troops on the island to check on their situation and to inspect the facilities, including the possibility of improving its airstrip. Later, he was not able to resist the call of the sea.

World's central bankers keep wary eye on marts

BASEL, SWITZERLAND—THE WORLD ECONOMY has weathered sharp drops in asset prices well so far but could face a slowdown if market volatility continues, central bank chiefs from key developing nations said on Saturday.

Stock and commodity markets worldwide have tumbled and higher yielding emerging market assets had been sold off in recent weeks on prospects of tightening financial conditions worldwide as central banks raised interest rates.

BIS summit

But some retreat in frothy asset pricing was needed, even if it risked dampening growth, said central bank governors on the sidelines of the annual meeting of the Bank for International Settlements (BIS), the bank to the world's central banks.

"The correction has not been an altogether unwelcome development so far," Mexico's central bank governor Guillermo Ortiz told Reuters at the three-day event.

Central bankers from over 100 countries were attending the meetings to discuss the impact of financial market declines on the global economic outlook at the BIS summit in the Swiss border city of Basel, officials said.

China's GDP growth

The world economy is forecast to grow around 4.9 percent this year and China, the world's fastest growing economy and now one of the biggest, looks set to be a major contributor.

Its central bank governor, Zhou Xiaochuan, said China was headed for 10 percent GDP growth in 2006, despite measures to cool it down. That would match last year's 10.3 percent.

Jordan's central bank governor Umayya Toukan said that "prudent" moves to tighten monetary conditions were needed to keep growth humming in the global economy.

Cheap cash

Masses of cheap cash from a period of very low interest rates is one reason for the recent market volatility, he said.

Central banks will need to monitor carefully the high volatility even if economic fundamentals remain favorable, the Philippine central bank chief Amando Tetangco told Reuters.

US dollar slide

"Overall the impact has not been that significant. I think this is because economic fundamentals in the emerging markets are continuing to be favorable ... External liquidity that has moved to this emerging market is still there," Tetangco said.

Many stock markets across the world have posted double-digit losses since May 10, and emerging market debt prices and the US dollar have slid against a backdrop of mounting worries about an inflationary upsurge and rising central bank rates.

But the correction has not hit all emerging markets equally, with some asset classes and some countries hit harder than others, Tetangco said.

Equity bubble

"Markets are definitely discriminating in terms of fundamentals," Mexico's Ortiz said.

"There are some emerging markets where an equity bubble developed, driven by liquidity," said the deputy governor of Kuwait's central bank, Nabeel al-Mannae. "You expect a bubble at one point in time will bust," he said.

Developing countries prepared

Argentina's central bank governor Martin Redrado said many developing countries have strengthened their position vis-a-vis global markets, building reserves and lowering external debt, and are better prepared than before to deal with stress.

"What you see is basically that Latin America has been weathering this turbulence very well (but) if it continues there will be less growth worldwide and therefore have an impact on domestic growth," he said.

Reuters

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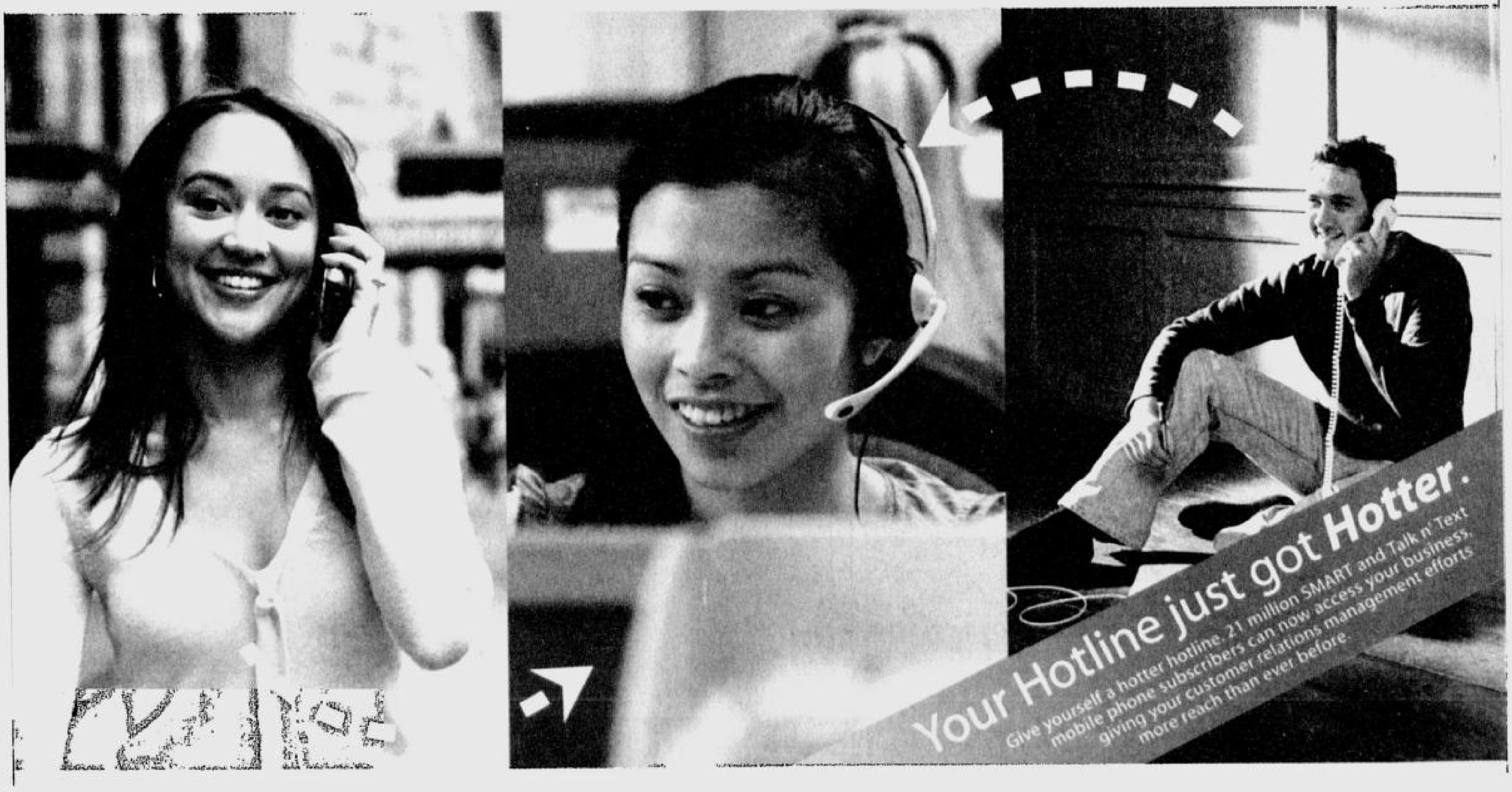

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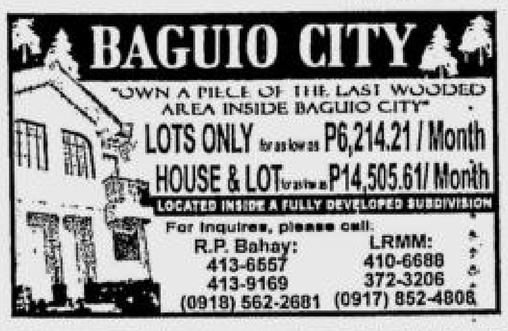
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Metro workers get ₱25 daily wage hike

By Christian V. Esguerra

THE REGIONAL TRIPARTITE WAGES and Productivity Board (RTWPB) yesterday announced a P25 increase in the daily basic pay of workers in Metro Manila.

The adjustment will hike to P350 the minimum daily wage of workers in the private sector in the National Capital Region.

On the other hand, workers in the agriculture sector (plantation and nonplantation), retail and services, and hospitals with a 100-bed capacity or less will be receiving a minimum basic pay of P313 (P263 basic pay plus a P50-cost of living allowance), from the previous wage rate of P288.

By law, the increase will take effect 15 days after the publication of Wage Order No. NCR-12 in a newspaper of general circulation.

The regional wage board pegged minimum wage earners in the country at around three million, the majority of whom are in Metro Manila.

The P25 increase was the compromise amount approved by the RTWPB which is composed of representatives from the Department of Trade and Industry, National Economic Development Authority, and labor and employers groups.

In a statement, wage board director Ricardo Martinez said they took into account the adjustment's possible impact on "inflation, employment, and the general economy."

"In coming up with Wage Order No. 12 for the National Capital Region, the members of the Regional Board considered the needs of the workers as well as the capacity of the employers to give out the needed relief for minimum wage earners," he said.

The amount was less than half of the P75 increase sought by the Trade Union Congress of the Philippines.

A separate P125 legislated, across-the-board increase had been earlier initiated at the House of Representatives.

Malacañang, however, shot down the proposal and instead referred the matter to the regional wage boards.

SISTER Ma. Victoria Sta. Ana and the "Busina Mo, Dunong Ko" mobile library. PHOTOS BY ERIK ARAZAS

Mobile library brings world of books to street children

Volunteer program seeks to help children escape from poverty through education

By Jocelyn R. Uy

TALES OF THE CITY

LIKE THE FABLED PIED PIPER OF HAMELIN, this Salesian nun has been plucking hundreds of children from a slum area in Pasay City to lead them to a brighter future.

But instead of luring them with a flute, Sister Maria Victoria Sta. Ana has been reaching out to the underprivileged through her mobile library.

Every Sunday, the brightly-painted van makes its way to Cabrera Street, passing through the narrow alleys in the neighborhood, before stopping in front of the San Roque Parish Church.

As soon as Sta. Ana gets off the van, she is mobbed by a swarm of children, aged 4 to 18 years old, all eager to examine the books inside the mobile library. Some of these kids live on the streets. Others stay under a bridge in the area while the rest live in a nearby depressed community.

Better Christians

Sta. Ana, with about 40 volunteers in tow, quickly divides the children into groups according to their age. Volunteers then take over, ready to begin the task of turning these kids into "better Christians and active citizens" of the country.

The children are taught catechism, values formation, good manners and proper hygiene.

Later, they are given lessons to improve their skills in reading, writing and Math.

The mobile library program, called "Busina Mo, Dunong Ko," is a project of the Vides Philippines Volunteers Foundation, Inc., the local affiliate of the international volunteer wing of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians congregation.

Sta. Ana is one of the pioneers of the group, which started in 1995 as a spin-off from the Salesian-run Laura Vicuña Foundation.

Education for the poor

Established to reach out to the poor, especially homeless women and their children, one of Vides' goals is to bring education to places where books are lacking.

"Our priority is education because we believe that it can help these children break the cycle of poverty," said Sta. Ana, the president of Vides. She added that the organization started the mobile library program only last month on Cabrera Street, targeting the 250 children in the area.

Sta. Ana and a core of 10 volunteers first came to Pasay City in 2000 to hold weekly outreach programs. The "street camps," as she called them, were held beside Edsa, underneath an overpass and near a bus terminal.

"It was really hard at that time. In the middle of our catechism, we sometimes had to stop to give way to passing cars," said Sta. Ana. On one occasion, she had to endure, not just the blistering heat of the sun, but the naughty children who were spitting on her from the overpass.

It would have been easy to give up then but her dedication to open the children's eyes to God's love spurred her to go on. "I believe that if people [realize] that they are loved, opportunities and resources will be awakened to better their lives," she said.

On board a Sarao jeep

Before the mobile library was born, Sta. Ana and her volunteers went around on a Sarao jeepney. The vehicle ferried them to 14 slum areas where they held street camps—Paco, Divisoria, Quirino Avenue, Sta. Mesa, Araneta Avenue, Cubao and Baclaran.

In 2002, the group decided to focus on just one area after realizing that they were not getting through to the children. "By the time we got to the first area for the follow-up meeting, the children who had attended before had already been replaced by a new set of kids," Sta. Ana said.

According to her, they picked Pasay City because there were few agencies that helped the poor in the city. The group transferred the weekly street camp to the San Roque Parish Church, in the hope that parishioners would continue their work should they move on to another slum area, she added.

"We brought the program to the church because we want the parishioners to realize that these poor children are their neighbors. I hope this will awaken their sense of responsibility toward the less fortunate of their parish," she said.

Nonformal learning

In two months, Sta. Ana said the "Busina Ko, Dunong Mo" program, in collaboration with the Department of Education, would be implementing the nonformal alternative learning program. Through it, children who attend the street camp would be able to earn elementary or high school diplomas.

This year, the organization will also be giving out scholarships to deserving children. "Many of them have dropped out of school because their parents cannot sustain their studies," Sta. Ana said of the children on Cabrera Street.

Poverty is so prevalent in the area that some children attend the street camps for the hotdog sandwiches that Sta. Ana and her volunteers hand out after the lessons.

"Some children would just come for the snacks. Sometimes, they would just eat the bread and take home the hotdog to their families for dinner," she said.

No stranger to poverty

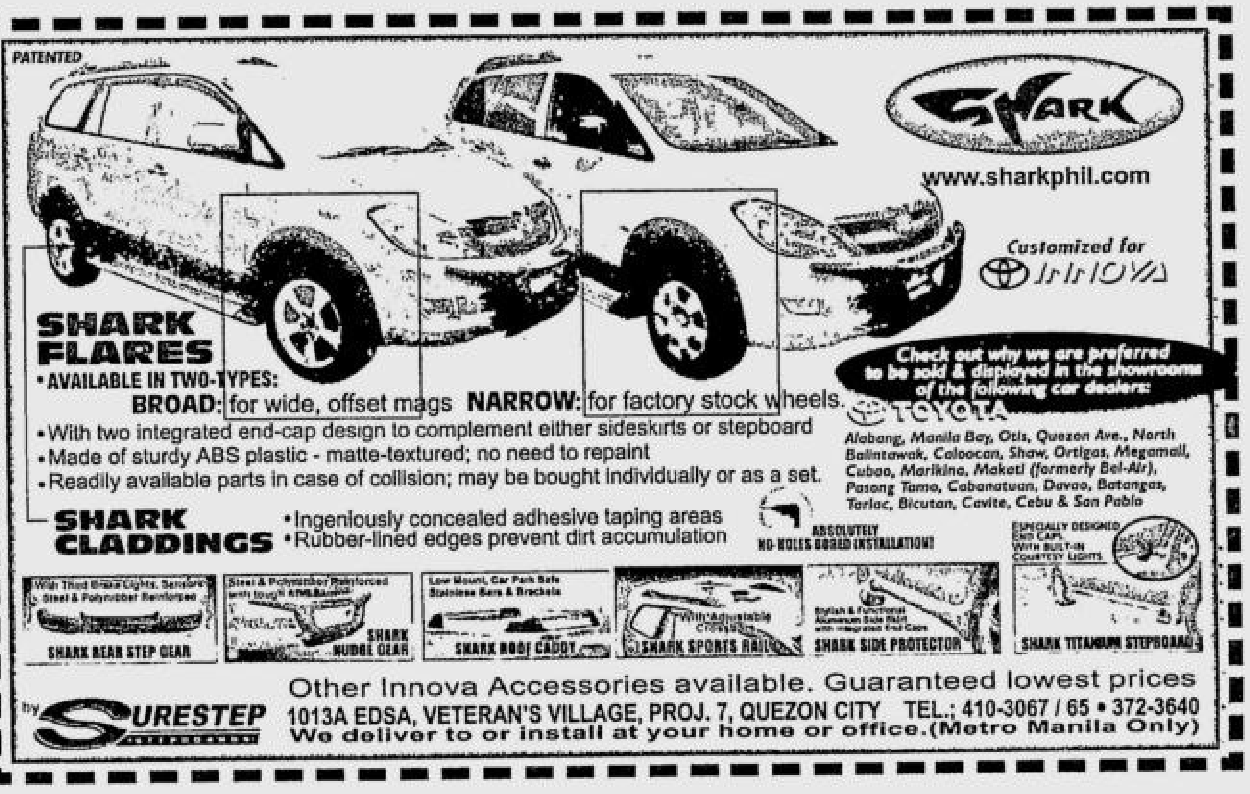
The 37-year-old Sta. Ana is no stranger to poverty although she comes from a well-to-do family in Victoria City, Negros Occidental.

On Sundays, during her high school years, she often saw children of *hacienda* workers troop to St. Mary Mazzarello School, where she was studying, to attend tutorials conducted by the Salesian nuns.

"I often asked my father why there are children who can't go to school. He would tell me

MOBILE/ A26

STA. ANA with her eager "students." The mobile library is equipped with a TV set, disc player and radio.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Suspect in drugstore robbery identified

By Tarra V. Quismundo

A MAN WHO WAS JAILED AFTER he tried to rob a convenience store in Parañaque last year has been identified by witnesses as one of several suspects who robbed a drugstore in the city last week.

Chief Supt. Wilfredo Garcia, Southern Police District (SPD) director, yesterday said that witnesses were able to identify Manuel Cerrado through police file photos.

According to the police official, Cerrado, 29, of Imus, Cavite, was detained last year for illegal possession of firearms after he tried to rob a store.

"He may have been released on bail and now, he struck again. He had several unidentified accomplices. Charges of robbery would be filed against him and several John Does tomorrow," the SPD official told the INQUIRER.

Last Wednesday, a group of men believed to have been led by Cerrado robbed the Mercury Drugstore in Barangay San Dionisio, Parañaque City at around 5:10 a.m.

Another branch of the drugstore, at the corner of Enrique Street and Zobel Roxas Avenue in Makati City, was held up by armed men more than 15 hours later.

"We are still checking if his group was the same one involved in the robbery in Makati … Makati and Parañaque [investigators] have already compared notes," Garcia said.

"This group strikes in banks but since they find it hard to break into banks, they choose soft targets like drugstores and convenience stores, where usually there is only one security guard and thus defense is weak, especially at night," he added.

Garcia urged owners and managers of commercial establishments to tighten security to deter criminals. He said there should be at least two security guards in 24-hour convenience stores and pharmacies to make it harder for them to be overpowered by thieves.

"There seems to be no extra effort for them to deter the commission of crimes in their establishments. That's why I am appealing to them to [step up] security measures because they are targets of these gangs," Garcia said.

A LOT of the children on Cabrera Street in Pasay live in shanties, on the streets or under a nearby bridge.

Mobile library brings world of books to street kids

From page A25

that we can only help so much. From that time on, I wondered how could I help these children," she said.

At 15, she decided to enter the convent, but her parents rejected the idea. After finishing her third year at the top of her class, her parents asked her what she wanted as a graduation gift. Her reply was, "For you to allow me to become a nun."

Opposition from parents

But Sta. Ana's parents were firmly against letting their youngest child enter God's service. After graduation, she was sent to a university in Metro Manila where her parents thought she would forget all about becoming a nun.

She enrolled at the Philippine Women University where she took up Social Work. She had wanted to take up Theology but her father thought it would only fan her desire to become a nun, Sta. Ana said.

"I also wanted to take up Guidance and Counseling at St. Scholastica's College but he disagreed because the school was being run by nuns too," she recalled.

Coming from an affluent family and attending an exclusive school, she found social work upsetting during her early years in college. "I was always in slum areas doing field work," she said.

Familiarization

But Sta. Ana realized that God had plans for her. "Eventually, I got comfortable being in slum areas. God was really preparing me for this work," she recalled.

Because of her determination, her parents finally gave in and she entered the convent in 1989. Her first task was to create Vides Philippines, which brought together volunteers who were already serving street children.

Over the years, the local organization has evolved into a dynamic and unified group of socially-oriented individuals devoted to working for the development of women and children.

Sta. Ana said seeing the change in the children of San Roque is already an accomplishment. When they first came to the area, the street kids were unruly and unkempt. They could not read or pray. They also did not know any religious songs.

"It is fulfilling to inspire children to learn new things and bring them closer to God at the end of the day. I know that we can't be the messiah for all these children. But at least [what we are doing] is a drop in the ocean. If the others see that we've helped one or two, I am sure they will also be inspired to help," she said.

METROBRIEFS

Market renovation postponed

THE SKETCHES are already available and part of the budget had been approved but the renovation of the biggest public market in Pasig City, if not in the metropolis, will not yet push through. "We are shelving the plan indefinitely," Pasig City Mayor Vicente Eusebio told the INQUIRER. He said the decision to postpone the project, which should have began four months ago as earlier announced by the city government, was made to avoid disrupting the operations of the Mutya ng Pasig Public Market. "The vendors will be affected if we push through with the renovation. I am considering just implementing minor repairs and repainting," Eusebio explained. The public market, built in 1974, has at least 3,000 legitimate vendors. *Edson C. Tandoc Jr.*

Marine, brother charged

A MARINE and his brother were arrested on Saturday night after they repeatedly fired their gun for no reason inside a Quezon City condominium. Private First Class Mark Paul Espinoza, 27, of the Philippine Marines, and his brother Edwin, 24, a college student, were charged with alarm and scandal after they allegedly caused trouble along Ephesus Street, North Olympus Subdivision in Novaliches. Eredia Albano, 23, a call center agent, told investigators that she was talking with her husband outside their house at Block 6, Lot 13 when Edwin, their neighbor, suddenly hurled invectives at them without provocation. Edwin then left but came back with his brother, Mark Paul, said case investigator SPO1 Demosthenes Rebancos. The couple ran away when Mark Paul repeatedly fired his gun into the open but the Espinozas chased them, prompting alarmed neighbors to call for police assistance. Responding policemen collared the brothers and charged them with alarm and scandal before the inquest prosecutor. *DJ Yap*

QC medical society to hold convention

THE QUEZON City Medical Society Inc., a component society of the Philippine Medical Association, will hold its 22nd annual convention and induction ceremonies on June 29 and 30. The theme of the event, which will be held at the Holiday Inn Galleria Manila on Ortigas corner ADB Avenues, is "Pag-ibayuhin ang Kagalingan ng Makataong Manggagamot." Members of the society are invited to attend the convention.

DID YOU KNOW?

DID YOU KNOW THAT Megastar Sharon Cuneta's father served as Pasay City mayor for over four decades?

Pablo Cuneta was appointed mayor of Pasay from 1950 to 1955. The following year, he ran for the post and won. He went on to win in the 1959 and 1963 mayoral polls, but lost to Jovito Claudio in 1967. Cuneta, however, recovered and won fresh terms in 1971 and 1980.

He stepped down in 1986 when the People Power Revolution toppled the Marcos dictatorship. But in the first post-EDSA election held in 1988, Cuneta emerged victorious, a feat he repeated in 1992 and 1995.

In 1997, he turned over the reins to Vice Mayor Wenceslao "Peewee" Trinidad due to his failing health. Cuneta died in 2003, after serving for 41 years under seven presidents—the only Filipino mayor to have done so.

Cyril Bonabente, PDI Research

DBP Development Bank of the Philippines

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND TO BID

The Development Bank of the Philippines ("DBP"), through its Special Bids and Awards Committee ("SBAC"), hereby issues this Invitation to interested parties to apply for pre-qualification and to bid for the purchase and assumption of DBP's rights, title, interest and obligations on Assets included in a Portfolio of Non-Performing Assets with total Gross Book Value ("GBV") of approximately Eleven Billion Pesos (PhP11,000,000,000.00) (the "Transaction").

The Portfolio of Non-Performing Assets will be sold through a sealed-bid public auction process. All interested parties may obtain the detailed Auction Announcement and Registration Package within the period June 26 to 30, 2006 from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. from and at the following address:

THE SECRETARIAT
SPECIAL BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
Sealed-Bid Public Auction of DBP's Portfolio of Non-Performing Assets
Asset Management Department
Ground Floor, DBP Building
Development Bank of the Philippines
Sen. Gil J. Puyat Avenue corner Makati Avenue
Makati City, Philippines 1200

Interested parties are required (a) to submit the required Registration Documents specified in the aforementioned Auction Announcement and Registration Package and (b) to pay the non-refundable Due Diligence Fee amounting to US Dollars: Ten Thousand and 00/100 (USD10,000.00) to be considered qualified to participate in the Transaction. A Qualified Bidder may subsequently be disqualified to participate in the Transaction should there be any material and/or intentional misstatement of information in the Registration Documents provided to DBP.

The Pre-Qualification Bidder Conference will be conducted at 10:00 a.m. on June 30, 2006. The said Pre-Qualification Bidder Conference will be held at Suite 5, 12th floor DBP Building. The Bidder Registration Cut-Off Date is at 12:00 noon on July 4, 2006. DBP, in its sole and absolute discretion, reserves the right to accept or decline registration documents received from any interested party after said date. Kindly note that registration documents submitted after the Bidder Registration Cut-Off Date will delay the distribution of the Investor Due Diligence Information Package to the particular potential bidder. The Investor Due Diligence period will start on July 5, 2006 and end on August 29, 2006. The bid for the Portfolio of Non-Performing Assets will be opened starting at 12:00 noon on August 30, 2006.

DBP ASSUMES NO OBLIGATION WHATSOEVER TO COMPENSATE OR INDEMNIFY ANY INTERESTED PARTY, PRE-QUALIFIED BIDDER OR WINNING BIDDER, AS THE CASE MAY BE, FOR ANY EXPENSE OR LOSS THAT SUCH PARTY(IES) MAY INCUR IN ITS PARTICIPATION IN THE PRE-QUALIFICATION AND BIDDING PROCESS.

DBP RESERVES THE RIGHT (i) TO WITHDRAW, CANCEL OR MODIFY THE TERMS OF THE TRANSACTION AT ANY TIME; (ii) TO REJECT ANY OR ALL INTERESTED PARTY(IES) FROM PARTICIPATING IN THE PRE-QUALIFICATION PROCESS; (iii) TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS; (iv) TO WAIVE ANY FORMALITY WITH RESPECT TO PARTICIPATION IN THE TRANSACTION; and/or (v) TO ACCEPT SUCH BID AS MAY BE CONSIDERED MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE BANK. ANY DECISION MADE BY THE BANK IS FINAL AND BINDING.

For any questions and/or additional information, please inquire as follows:

FINANCIAL ADVISOR TO DBP
for the Sealed-Bid Public Auction of DBP's Portfolio of Non-Performing Assets
c/o Asset Management Department
2nd floor, DBP Building
Development Bank of the Philippines
Sen. Gil J. Puyat Avenue corner Makati Avenue
Makati City, Philippines 1200
Telephone no.: +632 819 1308 and +632 818 9511 local 2228
Transaction E-mail: SPV_AMD@devbankphil.com.ph

(Sgd) ARMANDO O. SAMIA
Executive Vice President and
Chairman, Special Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI–June 26, 27 & 28, 2006)

CALL FOR EXHIBITORS AND CONFERENCE DELEGATES!
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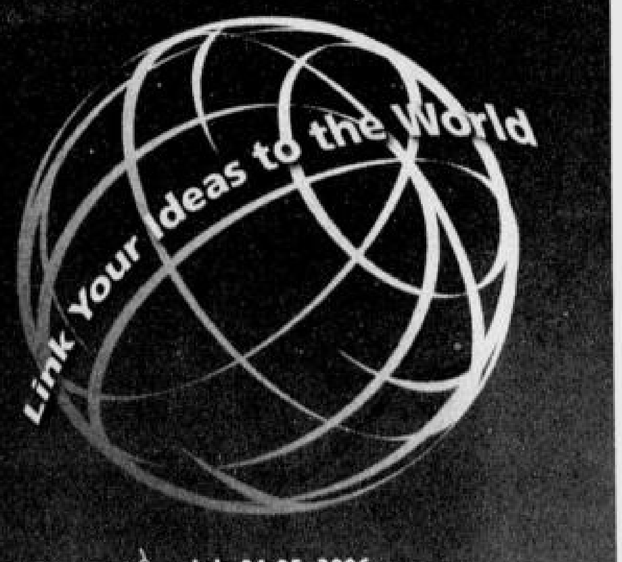
ASAP
2006 CONFERENCE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WHO SHOULD ATTEND

Brand and Product Managers, Promotion Managers, Corporate Communication Managers, Advertising & Marketing Managers, Agency Account Managers, Direct Marketing Managers, Creative Directors, Media Managers, Photographers, Copywriters, Jingle Writers, General Managers/Owners.

CONFERENCE KEY TOPICS

04 July 2006 (Day 1)

- Global Advertising Trends and Directions
- Creative Talent: Tips in Choosing and Managing Right Talent for Right Advertising Project
- "SHOOT THAT AMATEUR!": Client Pitfalls in Photographer-selection and How Best to Work With Your Pro
- Creative Product Promotion: Understanding how Merchandising Works and how it can Work for You
- Digital Printing: Value and Profitability
- The Anatomy of a TV Commercial Project

05 July 2006 (Day 2)

- Creative Entrepreneurship: Key to Sustaining and Managing Business Enterprise
- Ethics in Advertising
- Policies on Intellectual Property Rights
- Creative Marketing: Winning and Keeping Customers
- Planning and Evaluating Sponsorship Marketing
- Leveraging on SMS and 3G Technology as Advertising Channel
- Effective Internet and Web Advertising

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REGISTRATION FEE:

ASAP Member	RATE	DATE PERIOD
EARLY BIRD	P 4,000.00*	on or before 15 June '06
Regular Rate	P 5,000.00*	16 June to 03 July '06
On-Site Rate	P 6,000.00*	04 July '06
Non-ASAP Member	**RATE**	**DATE PERIOD**
EARLY BIRD	P 5,000.00*	on or before 15 June '06
Regular Rate	P 6,000.00*	16 June to 03 July '06
On-Site	P 7,000.00*	04 July '06
STUDENT	P 3,000.00*	

*inclusive of 2 days conference attendance, snacks, lunch and kit.

Exhibit Fees – P25,000.00 | 2.0 x 2.0 sqm.**
**inclusive of basic booth amenities: Wall panel, carpet, fascia, negotiable table and chairs, convenience outlet, flourescent lighting, general directory listing, general security, and janitorial services.

NB: Please inquire from ASAP Secretariat exhibit floor plan and layout.

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For more details, contact the ASAP Secretariat: Unit 2302, 23F Cityland 10 Tower 2, 154 H.V. dela Costa St., Salcedo Village, Makati City
Telephone: 893 0564/893 0738 • Fax: 893 0404 • Email: asapsec@pacific.net.ph

Tit-for-tat violence in Gaza

Israeli tanks raid Gaza after deadly Palestinian assault

GAZA CITY—ISRAEL SENT TANKS and troops into the Gaza Strip on Sunday hours after a massive Palestinian militant attack against an army border post that caused both Israeli and Palestinian casualties.

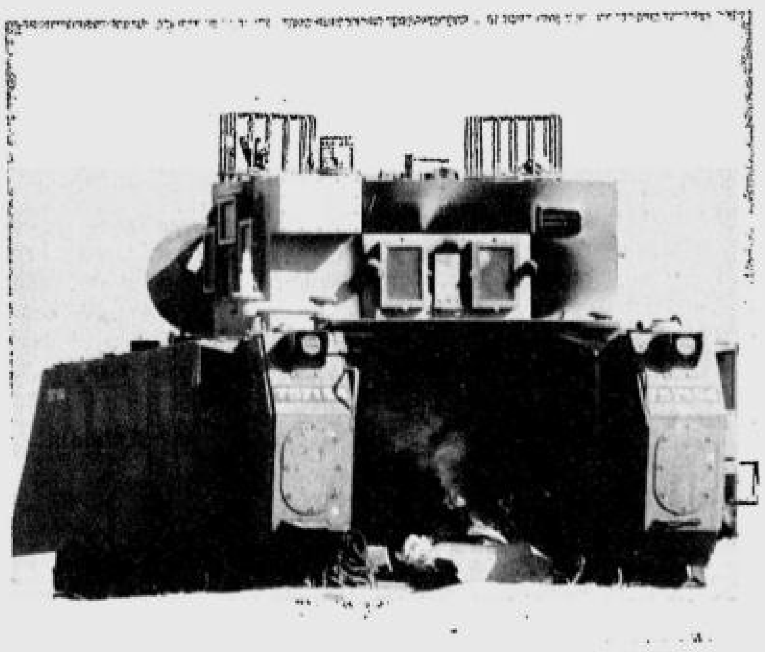
It was the worst violence on the border area since Israel pulled out of the Gaza Strip last summer, ending a 38-year occupation of the tiny Palestinian territory.

Several Palestinian armed groups claimed responsibility for the attack on the army post on the border between southern Gaza and Israel, including the Popular Resistance Committees and the armed wing of the ruling Hamas movement, the Ezzedin al-Qassam Brigades.

Israeli tanks and armored vehicles crossed into the southern Gaza Strip near the area of Kibbutz Kerem Shalom where the attack took place to search the area, an army spokesperson said.

It was the largest Israeli ground operation in the Gaza Strip since Israel withdrew troops and settlers from the territory last summer.

The attack, which the PRC said was carried out to avenge the killing of its leader by Israeli forces this month, left two militants from the PRC and the Islamic Jihad dead and also caused Israeli casualties.



AN ISRAELI armored personnel carrier hit by a rocket attack by Palestinian militants near the Gaza Strip June 25. REUTERS

An Israeli army spokesperson in Jerusalem said six Israeli soldiers were "hit" in the attack near the Sufa and Kerem Shalom crossing points but would not elaborate on whether they were killed or wounded.

Palestinian militants reached the area through a tunnel they had dug and fired anti-tank rockets at an Israeli unit protecting the Kerem Shalom crossing point. An armored vehicle was hit full-on, the military sources said without giving details.

Members of the nearby Kibbutz Kerem Shalom were ordered to remain in their houses as exchanges of fire continued along the border.

A spokesperson for the PRC said it had carried out a "major, complicated joint operation" with the Ezzedin al-Qassam Brigades as well as the Al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades which is loosely affiliated to the Fatah movement of Palestinian leader Mahmud Abbas and a previously unknown group calling itself the Army of Islam.

The two dead Palestinians were named as Mohammed Salwana, a member of the radical Islamic Jihad militant group, and Hamed al-Rantissi, a member of the Popular Resistance Committees, a PRC spokesperson said.

Spokesperson Abu Mujahid said militants attacked several Israeli military posts between Sufa and Kerem Shalom to avenge the targeted killing of group leader Jamal Abu Samhadana.

"Our men on the scene saw the bodies of at least three Israeli soldiers," the spokesperson said.

Samhadana, who was wanted by Israel and had already escaped two other assassination attempts, was killed in a missile strike near a military training camp in the southern Gaza City of Rafah on June 8.

The crossing point at Rafah between Gaza and Egypt—the only Palestinian gateway to the outside world without going through Israel—was later closed as a result of the violence, a Palestinian official said.

The latest confirmed deaths bring to 5,119 the number of people killed since the start of the intifada in September 2000, most of them Palestinians, according to an AFP toll. *AFP*

India call centers hit by backlash over setbacks

LONDON—INDIA HAS REAPED the benefits of foreign companies switching jobs and resources to the country over the last five years—but recent developments have pointed toward a backlash.

Problems of long-distance management and rising local wages appear to have caused a significant setback for the offshoring of foreign companies to India.

British energy giant Powergen has become the latest company to suffer from poor staff service, leading it to announce last week that call centers in India would no longer be answering telephone calls from its customers.

Trade union Amicus described the energy company's decision as "a welcome vote of confidence" in British workers.

"We very much hope that Powergen's decision will help bolster the reputation of UK call center operations and turn the tide of companies moving their call center operations to low-wage economies," said David Fleming, national secretary of Amicus.

"We hope that companies that have offshored will follow by announcing moves back to the UK and other companies contemplating moving their operations abroad will balance the potential impact on their services and brand."

Fleming added that there was "evidence of a growing crisis" in the Indian outsourcing industry that was included rising labor costs and recruitment problems.

Powergen, which began using Indian call centers almost five years ago, is owned by leading German energy supplier E.ON.

Nick Horler, Powergen managing director, conceded that "offshore call centers may have their place for certain industries."

"However, we believe that we can best achieve industry-leading customer service by operating solely in the UK."

In recent years, foreign companies including banks and telecommunications groups have switched their call-center operations to India as well as elsewhere in Asia, north Africa and eastern Europe in a bid to save costs.

In a move that bucked the international trend however, a leading Indian outsourcing company outlined plans last week to create 1,000 call-center jobs in Northern Ireland. *AFP*

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The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Top US general in Iraq plans troop cut

WASHINGTON—THE TOP AMERICAN COMMANDER IN Iraq has drafted a plan that projects sharp reductions in the US military presence there by the end of 2007, with the first cuts coming this September, American officials say.

According to a classified briefing at the Pentagon this week by the commander, Gen. George W. Casey Jr., the number of American combat brigades in Iraq is projected to decrease to five or six from the current level of 14 by December 2007.

Under the plan, the first reductions would involve two combat brigades that would rotate out of Iraq in September without being replaced. Combat brigades, which generally have about 3,500 troops, do not make up the bulk of the 127,000-member American force in Iraq.

American officials emphasized that any withdrawals would depend on continued progress, including the development of competent Iraqi security forces, a reduction in Sunni Arab hostility toward the new Iraqi government and the assumption that the insurgency will not expand beyond Iraq's six central provinces. Even so, the projected troop withdrawals in 2007 are more significant than many experts had expected.

Estimating the precise number of American troops that may be deployed in Iraq at the end of 2007 is difficult, one officer said. A reduction of eight combat brigades would equal about 28,000 troops. But that does not mean that the reduction in the remainder of the force would be proportional: troops would still be needed to help with logistics, intelligence, training and air strikes.

Casey's briefing has remained a closely held secret, and it was described by American officials who agreed to discuss the details only on condition of anonymity.

The commander met this week with Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld and Gen. Peter Pace, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. On Friday, Casey and Rumsfeld met with President Bush at the White House. *NYT*

CIA officer says US ignored warnings about WMD errors

WASHINGTON—US ADMINISTRATION officials chose to ignore a CIA officer's warnings that an Iraqi defector's claims of purported biological labs made by Iraq for germ warfare were unproven, The Washington Post reported Sunday.

The Post quoted veteran CIA officer Tyler Drumheller who, it said, "recognized the source, an Iraqi defector suspected of being mentally unstable and a liar.

"The CIA officer took his pen," he recounted in an interview, "and crossed out the whole paragraph" in a statement to be presented by then Secretary of State Colin Powell to the United Nations.

"A few days later, the lines were back in the speech. Powell stood before the UN Security Council on Feb. 5 (2003) and said: 'We have first-hand descriptions of biological weapons factories on wheels and on rails.'"

Drumheller was stunned, the newspaper reported.

"We thought we had taken care of the problem," it quoted the man who was the CIA's European operations chief before retiring last year, as saying. "But I turn on the television and there it was, again."

The newspaper said that although the US government had "acknowledged intelligence failures over Iraqi weapons claims that led to war," new accounts by former insiders such as Drumheller shed light on "one of the most spectacular failures of all."

This was, it added: "How US intelligence agencies were eagerly drawn in by reports about a troubled defector's claims of secret germ factories in the Iraqi desert. The mobile labs were never found."

Drumheller "described in extensive interviews repeated attempts to alert top CIA officials to problems with the defector, code-named Curveball, in the days before the Powell speech," the Post said.

Yet "the warnings triggered debates within the CIA but ultimately made no visible impact at the top, current and former intelligence officials said," it added.

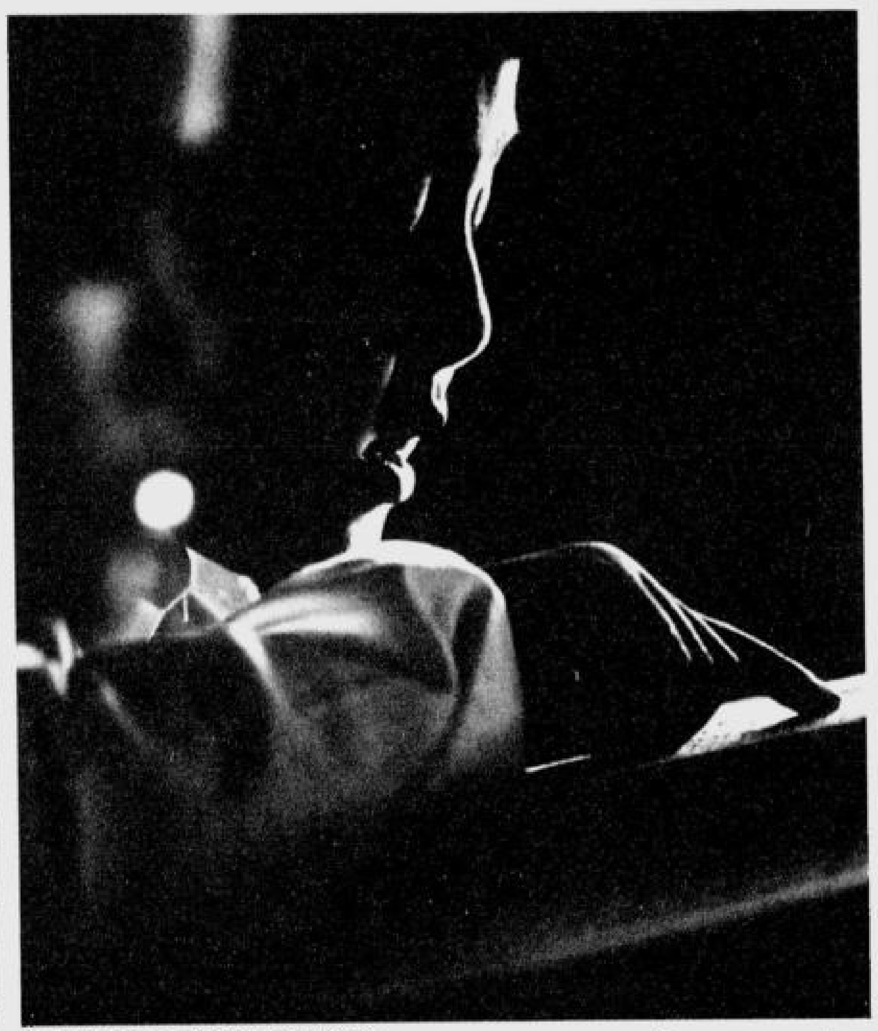
"In briefing Powell before his UN speech, George Tenet, then the CIA director, personally vouched for the accuracy of the mobile-lab claim, according to participants in the briefing.

"Tenet now says he did not learn of the problems with Curveball until much later and that he received no warnings from Drumheller or anyone else," the Post said.

In late 2002, the Bush administration began scouring intelligence files for reports of Iraqi weapons threats, the newspaper went on.

"Drumheller was asked to press a counterpart from a European intelligence agency for direct access to Curveball. Other officials confirmed that it was the German intelligence service," the Post said.

"The German official declined but then offered a startlingly candid assessment," Drumheller recalled. *AFP*



STARTING THEM YOUNG REUTERS

Boys recite the Koran at a mosque in Kuala Lumpur June 15. Malaysia's Federal Court could rule in a few days on whether Islamic courts—which have authority over the country's Muslims—have the sole right to judge apostates.

China won't criminalize sex-selective abortions

BEIJING—CHINA'S LEGISLATURE HAS scrapped an amendment to the criminal law that would ban abortions based on the sex of the fetus, state media reported Sunday, despite a growing population imbalance between males and females.

Members of the national legislature's standing committee were divided over criminalizing sex-selective abortions and removed the provision from a draft amendment Saturday, the China Youth Daily said.

"Many controversies remain," the Xinhua News Agency said.

The original amendment, last discussed by the National People's Congress committee in April, called for fines and prison terms of up to three years for aborting a fetus because of the sex for non-medical reasons, the reports said.

A three-decade-old policy limiting most couples to one child has made abortion a widely used method for controlling family size. As a result, and due to a traditional preferences for sons, China faces a growing population imbalance, with many more boys than girls.

Xinhua said there are now 119 boys born for every 100 girls, a larger gap than the government's previously published figure of 117 to 100. *AP*

Sears Tower: Plot more word than deed

WASHINGTON—AN ALLEGED SCHEME TO topple the Sears Tower in Chicago and attack Miami's FBI headquarters was "more aspirational than operational," a top FBI official said Thursday, the day after seven Florida men were arrested on terrorism charges.

John S. Pistole, deputy director of the FBI, and Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales said at a news conference that authorities chose to head off the would-be plot, which had involved casing some potential targets in Florida, when it was still largely at the discussion stage.

Gonzales acknowledged that the men, who had neither weapons nor explosives, posed "no immediate threat" but added that "they did take sufficient steps that we believe does support this prosecution."

The indictment made clear that a key role was played by an unnamed undercover FBI informant who posed as an al-Qaida member and met repeatedly with the group's alleged ringleader, Narseal Batiste.

In May, after months of meeting with the purported al-Qaida representative, Batiste told him "he was experiencing delays because of various problems within his organization" but still hoped to continue his mission of building an "Islamic army" to wage jihad against the United States, the indictment said.

The Chicago police superintendent, Phil Cline, said there was "never any imminent danger to the Sears Tower or to the city of Chicago," and Florida officials emphasized that the alleged attack plans never got past the discussion stage.

Nonetheless, the seven defendants—ranging in age from 21 to 32 and including five Americans, a legal immigrant from Haiti and a Haitian in the United States illegally—expressed grandiose goals during the yearlong investigation by FBI agents and the police, officials said.

The indictment charged that Batiste recruited the others beginning in November "to wage war against the United States government." Gonzales said the men said they wanted to "kill all the devils we can" in attacks that would be "just as good or greater than 9/11." *NYT*

NEGROS OCCIDENTAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.
(NOCECO)
Kabankalan City, Negros Occidental

June 8, 2006

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

NOCECO invites interested parties to apply for eligibility and to bid for:

ITEMS	QUANTITY
Automatic Voltage Regulator, single phase, oil-immersed, 7620 rated voltage, 114 KVA, 95 KV BIL	3 units
Kyle Recloser type KFME, 560A, 15.5KV, 8KA, 230VAC	1 unit
Kyle Electronic Control, FXB, microprocessor based operation	2 units

All interested parties may obtain the bidding documents from NOCECO Main Office, Naga, Brgy. Binicuil, Kabankalan City, Negros Occidental.

Pre-Bid conference will be held on July 4, 2006 at 1:00 p.m. at the NOCECO Conference Room. All prospective bidders must attend the pre-bid conference as the schedule of the opening of bids will be announced during the conference.

NOCECO assumes no obligation whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidders for any excuse or loss that they may incur in the preparation of their bids. NOCECO also reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any of the required formality therein and accept the bids most advantageous.

For more details, you may inquire from NOCECO Purchasing Unit at the address stated above or you may call telephone nos. (034) 4712-170, (telefax) (034) 4713-359, 4712-829 or e-mail us at noceco@glinesnx.com.ph

(Sgd.) LAMBERTO M. CANLAS
General Manager

(PDI – June 26, 2006)

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
CITY OF ILOILO

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), Iloilo City invites interested contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid on the following project.

Name of Project	Proposed Const. / Replacement of Burnt Bldg. (including Termite Control) Phase II
Project Location	A. Mabini Elem. School Cor. Mabini-Gen. Luna St., Iloilo City
Approved Budget for the Contract	P 6,251,461.04
Source of Fund	SEF 2005
Contract Duration	240 Calendar Days
Scope of Work	Phase II Construction of three (3) storey office building
Contractor's PCAB License	At least Small B

The Schedule of Bidding Activities is as follows:

Period for the Submission of Letter of Intent	July 4-11, 2006
Period for the Submission of Eligibility Forms	July 4-11, 2006
Period for the Issuance of Bid Documents	July 18-21, 2006
Pre-Bid Conference at the City Budget Office Conference Room	July 25, 2006 at 10:00 AM
Last Day of Submission of Bids in Sealed Envelopes (c/o BAC Secretariat)	Aug. 8, 2006 at 10:00 AM
Opening of Bids in Sealed Envelopes at the City Budget Office Conference Room	Aug. 8, 2006 at 10:00 AM

Complete sets of Eligibility Requirements may be obtained from the Office of the BAC Secretariat at the General Services Office, City Hall, Iloilo City. Duly accomplished Eligibility Forms shall be submitted in sealed envelope addressed to the BAC Chairman c/o BAC Secretariat.

Eligible contractors may obtain the Bid Tender Documents at the Office of the BAC Secretariat, General Services Office, City Hall, Iloilo City upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Two Thousand (P 2,000.00) Pesos on the above prescribed period.

Prospective Bidders shall signify their conformance to the Bidding Terms and Conditions as required and shall ensure the same through proper submission/execution. The criteria to be used by BAC in the Eligibility Check of Prospective Bidders shall be on a non-discretionary "pass/fail" basis.

The provisions of RA 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations and other applicable rules and regulations shall govern all particulars relative to Eligibility Bid Bond, Performance Bond, Pre-Bid Conference, Bid Evaluation and Award of Contract.

Executive Order No. 398, dated January 12, 2005, by the Office of the President under Sec. 3 - "To ensure continuing compliance with tax laws, all government contracts shall include a stipulation that the private contracting party shall pay taxes in full and on time and that failure to do so will entitle the government to suspend payment for any goods or services delivered by the private contracting party."

The BAC reserves the right to accept or reject all Bids or part thereof, to waive formality therein or to accept such bids or to award any work that is considered most advantageous to the Local Government Unit.

(Sgd.) ATTY. EDGARDO J. GIL
BAC Chairman

(PDI – June 26 & July 3, 2006)

New leaders set to take over in Vietnam

HANOI—A NEW GOVERNMENT IS SET TO take over in Vietnam this week, tasked with steering the communist country into a new economic era, after the prime minister and other leaders stepped down at the weekend.

In the reshuffle, deputy premier Nguyen Tan Dung, 56, a former state bank chief, is expected to succeed his longtime mentor Phan Van Khai, who resigned as prime minister at age 72 on Saturday after nine years of fast-paced change.

Economic reformer Nguyen Minh Triet, 63, the party boss in the southern business hub of Ho Chi Minh City, is seen as the most likely candidate to replace Tran Duc Luong, 69, as president of the one-party state.

The national assembly, which approved the resignations on Saturday, will also appoint a new chief of the legislature and ministers of foreign affairs, defense, interior, finance, transport, health, and culture and information.

The changes have been expected since a five-yearly congress of the ruling Communist Party in April but must be approved by the 496-member assembly, which is scheduled to wrap up its six-week session this week.

Party boss Nong Duc Manh spoke Saturday of the need to "harmonize the leadership of the party with the state and guarantee the succession of the national leadership," the state-run Vietnam News Agency reported.

"It's an orderly generational change," said Vietnam expert Carl Thayer of the Australian Defense Force Academy. "Senior people are going and being replaced by their understudies." *AFP*

AN AFGHAN National Army soldier stands guard during a joint vehicle and foot patrol with British soldiers in Helmand, southern Afghanistan. AFP

48 Afghan rebels killed in battle

KANDAHAR, AFGHANISTAN—AFGHAN AND US-led coalition forces killed 48 rebels in southern Afghanistan in a single battle, part of the biggest anti-Taliban operation since 2001, an army commander said Sunday.

The rebels were killed in the Taliban hotbed of Panjwayi district in Kandahar province in the battle, which began on Saturday and lasted into the night, said Afghan military corps commander Gen. Rahmatullah Raufi.

"In the offensive we launched yesterday in Panjwayi, 48 rebels were killed," Raufi said. "There were no casualties to Afghan and coalition forces."

That brought to almost 200 the number of insurgents killed over the past two weeks. The Afghan defense ministry had put the toll for that period at 149 on Saturday.

Operation Mountain Thrust is focused on southern Afghanistan, among the areas worst hit by an increasingly deadly insurgency launched by the Taliban after it was removed from government by a US-led coalition in late 2001.

The coalition has said the campaign is intended to "set the conditions" for a Nato-led force's takeover in late July of command of the southern region from a US-led coalition that has been there for more than four years.

Mountain Thrust involves forces from Britain, Canada and the United States, among other nations, as well as around 3,000 soldiers from Afghanistan's fledgling army.

The coalition announced Saturday that it and Afghan forces had killed an estimated 65 rebels in two battles the previous day, including one in Panjwayi where 25 were killed. *AFP*

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SPORTS

Editor Teddyvic S. Melendres
Text us your feedback: inquirer sprt name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

Figueroa powers team to victory /A30

Del Rosario, Ang share title /A31

WHAT'S INSIDE

Staglets start title defense /A30

Germans roll into World Cup last 8 /A32
Agassi announces retirement /A32

Beermen level series; Aces near finals berth

GAMES WEDNESDAY (*Araneta Coliseum*)
4:45 p.m.—Alaska vs Purefoods
7:35 p.m.—San Miguel Beer vs Red Bull

By June Navarro

RED BULL DID SOMETHING drastic to alter the momentum but to no avail.

San Miguel Beer, refusing to be distracted by a near-walkout initiated by Red Bull, hammered out a series-tying 106-82 victory in Game 4 of their PBA Philippine Cup semifinals last night at the Araneta Coliseum.

With two minutes and six seconds left before halftime, Red Bull coach Yeng Guiao sued for a timeout and led his Bulls to the dugout following a foul called by referee Throngy Aldaba on Cyrus Baguio.

Baguio bit on a fake by San Miguel's Dondon Hontiveros, who initiated contact just as he was about to launch a three-pointer with the Beermen ahead, 41-32.

The Bulls returned on the floor five minutes later and were assessed two technical fouls for delaying the game.

In the second game, Alaska took a 3-1 series edge and moved to within a win of a championship berth with a 91-77 demolition of Purefoods.

Red Bull's court clear-out was reminiscent of the 1990 First Conference Finals when the Sonny Jaworski-led Anejo Rhum staged a walkout in Game 6 of the series to serve the crown to the Shell Turbochargers on a silver platter.

Jaworski and the Rhummasters was penalized P550,000. The Bulls faced a higher penalty if they pushed through with the walkout, an amount that could have reached millions especially if the loss of television revenues would be factored into the fines.

"They tried to change the momentum of the game," said Beermen coach Jong Uichico.

"At that time, my only concern was how the walkout would affect us mentally," he added.

Balanced scoring also did it for the Beermen.

Danny Seigle reached another career milestone after turning in 24 points, his 16th consecutive 20-plus output in the conference to overtake Alvin Patrimonio's 15 straight 20-point games during the 1992 season.

But apart from Seigle, six other Beermen punched in double figures also. Dondon Hontiveros fired 17 points, Dorian Peña added 16, Chris Calaguio and Danny Ildefonso added 13 each while Francis Adriano and Olsen Racela chipping 10 points apiece.

Peña even had his 16th straight double-double performance by also grabbing 11 rebounds.

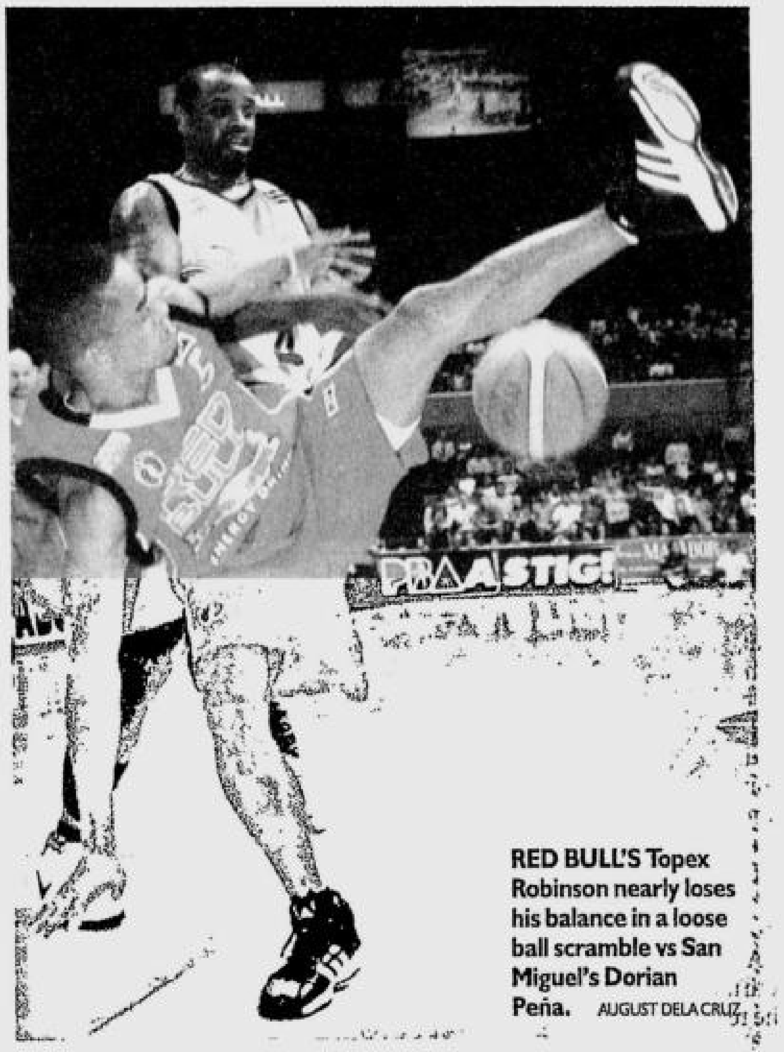
The scores:

First Game

SAN MIGUEL 106—Seigle 24, Hontiveros 17, Peña 16, Calaguio 13, Ildefonso 13, Adriano 10, Racela 10, Lopez 2, Gonzales 1, Kong 0, Cablay 0, Noble 0.

RED BULL 82—Baguio 16, Tugade 15, Najorda 13, Villanueva 6, Fonacier 6, Robinson 6, Bugia 4, Hrabak 4, Valenzuela 4, Pennisi 4, Cruz 2.

Quarters: 20-17, 45-40, 73-62, 106-82



RED BULL'S Topex Robinson nearly loses his balance in a loose ball scramble vs San Miguel's Dorian Peña. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

OSCAR Larios claims he's ready to rumble against Manny Pacquiao.

Fit and ready Larios blows into town

By Nikko Dizon

MEXICAN FIGHTER OSCAR "CHOLOLO" Larios arrived yesterday afternoon in Manila, looking upbeat and all worked up for his mammoth July 2 fight against Filipino boxing icon Manny Pacquiao at the Araneta Coliseum.

Larios, accompanied by his trainer, Eddie Reinoso, planed in at 12:50 p.m. via Japan Airlines flight JAL 741 at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Naia) Terminal 1.

Dressed in a black jogging suit over a white T-shirt, Larios received a warm welcome from airport and airline staff, government employees and passengers who had their pictures taken with him.

While he spoke only in Spanish, Larios tried to tell the reporters that he was all ready and prepared for his match against Pacquiao.

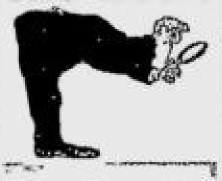
Recent news reports said that Larios had broken the ribs of World Boxing Council bantamweight champion Hozumi Hasegawa in Japan, where the former world champion trained.

The fight is not for any title but will be the first for Pacquiao since his destruction of Mexican legend Erik Morales early this year launched him to full world superstardom.

Pacquiao will use this match to prime up for an expected third confrontation with Morales, a fight which experts said would be worth millions of dollars for the Filipino regarded to be, pound-for-pound, the best in the globe today.

Pacquiao, incidentally, was also expected to arrive yesterday from his hometown in General Santos where he visited his wife Jinkee and two kids. The hammer-fisted former bakery laborer left Saturday for a much-deserved break.

It was the first real break for the "Pacman" since plunging into serious preparations for this fight. Pacquiao started training last month at Freddie Roach's Wild Card gym in Hollywood, California.



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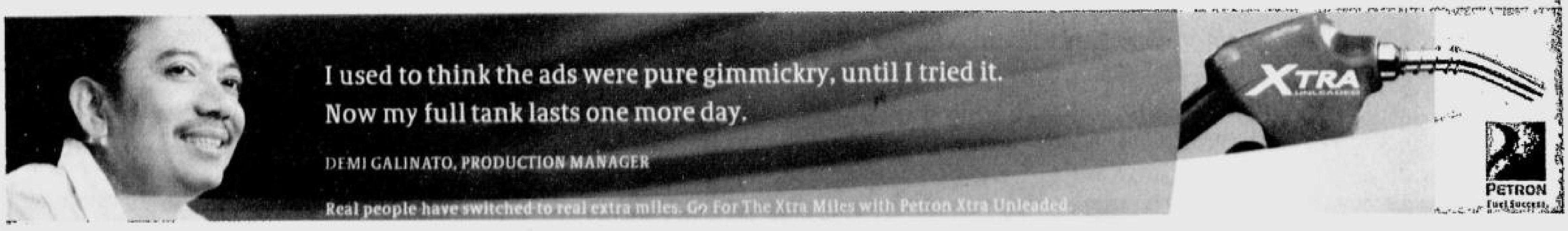

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Ozamiz, Pagadian cagers prevail anew, gain s'finals

OZAMIZ CITY—DEFENDING CHAMPION Ozamiz Cotta and expansion team Pagadian hurdled their respective rivals Friday to join Spring Cooking Oil-Parañaque and Batang Tagaytay in the crossover semifinals of the 2006 Guerrero Brandy-NBC national basketball championship.

The Cotta Shrine cagers of Mayor Reynaldo Parojinog leaned on twin towers Marlon Basco and Billy Bansil to ward off Valencia's fierce rally in the stretch, 82-73, and earn a date with Tagaytay.

Over at Pagadian City, the Explorers of Mayor Sammy Co posted a convincing 99-85 victory over the Toyota-Iloilo Warriors to arrange a semifinal meeting with top northen division team Spring-Parañaque.

Basco collected 20 points and 13 rebounds while Bansil finished with 17 markers, five rebounds and three steals.

Francis Sanz tried to keep the Warriors in the game, scoring 14 in the first half. But he got into foul trouble and had to sit out most of the second half.

Ex-pro Peter Naron produced a game-high 28 points plus five boards, two assists and two blocks to power the Explorers in the next stage of the tournament sponsored by Panasonic, Sulpicio Lines, Nature's Spring Mineral Water, Spring Cooking Oil, Regent Foods, Firefly Lightings. Molten and Prime Channel.

Bong Marata and Adrian Daja ably backed Naron with 20 and 13 points, respectively. Marata also had eight assists while Daja collared 12 rebounds.

The scores:

OZAMIZ 82—Basco 20, Bansil 17, Sampilo 9, Ilanga 8, Guerrero 7, Alberto 7, Yabut 6, Lapera 2, Cavan 2, Llangco 2, Caylan 0, Cabigkis 0, Delina 0.

VALENCIA 73—Cabili 17, Concha 14, Cesar 9, Navales 8, Berami 6, Cummings 4, Nallon 4, Cruz 4, Adams 3, Clavel 2, Dumapig 0.

Quarters: 23-21, 46-46, 64-61, 82-73

* * *

PAGADIAN 99—Naron 28, Marata 20, Daja 13, Sinco11, Salud 10, Orquillas 6, Ayuk 4, Cortez 3, Lanutan 2, Gatumbato 2, Omandam 0, Pamaran 0.

ILOILO 85—Senierez 22, Balgos 21, Sanz 19, Sinco 14, Leonida 5, Sencil 2, Poral 2.

Quarters: 26-23, 53-50, 78-64, 99-85

Staglets start title defense

SAN SEBASTIAN COLLEGE OPENS ITS title-retention campaign as action in the 82nd National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) junior basketball tournament comes off the wraps today at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium.

The Staglets, who dethroned the San Beda Reb Cubs last year, battle the Perpetual Altalettes in the middle of a triple bill at 1:45 p.m.

The Red Cubs and the Jose Rizal Light Bombers meet in the curtain raiser at 12 noon, while the Letran Squires tackle the College of Saint Benilde-La Salle Greenhills Greenies at 3:30 p.m.

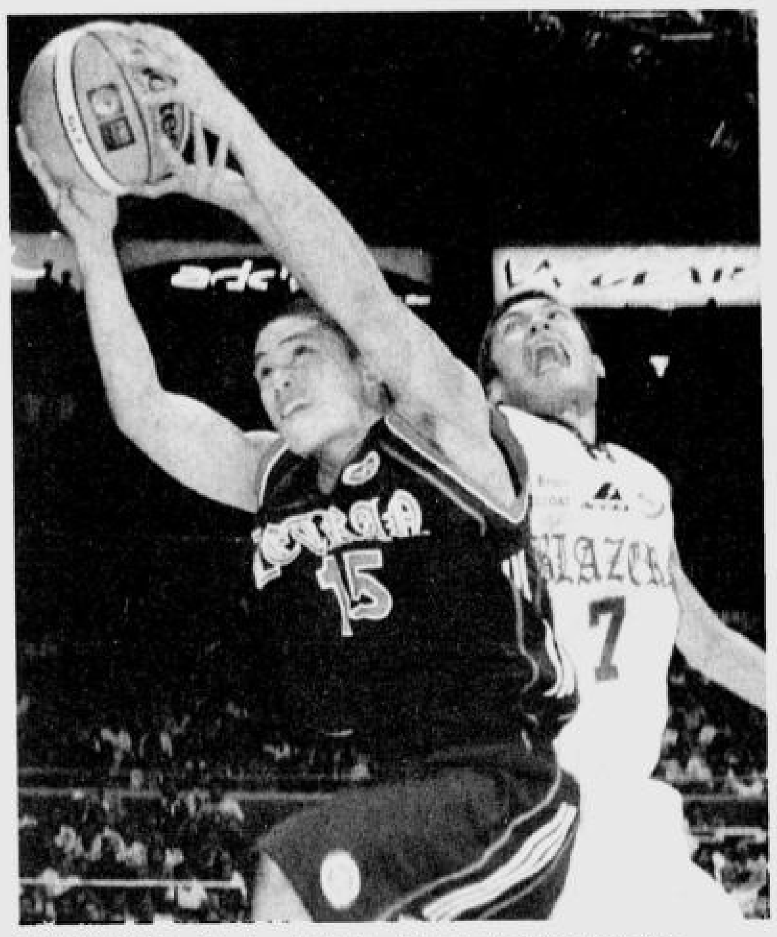
GAMES TODAY
(Ninoy Aquino Stadium)
12 noon—JRU vs SBC (Jrs)
1:45 p.m.—SSC-R vs UPHD (Jrs)
3:30 p.m.—CSB vs Letran (Jrs)

The Staglets ended a 19-year title drought last year by sweeping the Red Cups in their championship series.

But the Staglets, coached by the youthful Raymond Valenzona, will be hard-pressed to match that feat this time as they will go into battle without key players from last year's champion team, including Finals MVP Eric Salamat and gunner Raffy Reyes.

"*Malaking* factor *'yung pagkawala ng* key players *namin, pero* (We'll miss our key players last year but) I'm still confident *na may mga magi*-step up *sa mga puwesto na nabakante* (there will be players who will step up," said Valenzona.

Action resumes in men's and women's volleyball tournament starting at 8 a.m. today


LETRAN'S Dino Daa beats St. Benilde's Jingle Devaras to the rebound during Saturday's opening senior game at the Araneta Coliseum. The Knights scuttled the Blazers, 65-44. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

ON TARGET: Jasmin Figueroa rejoices. REUTERS

Figueroa powers team to victory

OLONGAPO CITY—ATHENS OLYMPICS and national champion Jasmin Figueroa powered Region 3 PAC-Magalang to the team title in the 2006 national archery target championship which ended Saturday at the Subic Bay Freeport Football field here.

Figueroa and teammates Katherine Annalyn Santos, Mary Grace Dolfo and Juvie Murao tallied 174 points to beat Sudac's Karen Yasi, Anne Galicia, Justine Megan Yu and Joan Tejada by 18 points in the recurve division.

Sudac A, led by national titlist Mark Javier, prevailed in the men's recurve team competition with 190 points.

Javier and teammates Joseph Solitario, Ian Wayne Larsen and Neil Divinagracia whipped Sudac B's Gerard Laguardia, Ismael Sarmiento and Kenny Kapili by 13 points.

Newly crowned compound division king Enrique "Kit" Cojuangco Jr. powered IPK2 to the team title. IPK2 carded 212 to edge Associate's Earl Yap, Fermin Barrenechea and Karl Achacoso by two points. Sudac was third with 190.

Director of shooting Ruperto Sampoleo lauded the organizers for the tournament's success.

SPORTSWATCH

Fronda upsets Bolico in Shell active chess tilt

CHRISTIAN FRONDA STUNNED EIGHTH-SEED Expedito Bolico Jr. to join a big bunch of undefeated players after three rounds of the NCR leg of the 2006 Shell National Youth Active Chess Championships at SM City Manila on Saturday. Fronda, ranked 69th in a field of 284, also bested Nicanor Saldo Jr. and Cynil Olvina to join 27 others with 3.0 scores in the 14-under group. Top seed Jan Emmanuel Garcia was held to a draw by Paulo Bersamina in the second round for 2.5 points. Earlier, NCFP president and Surigao Rep. Prospero Pichay Jr. and Lito Diga, Pilipinas Shell vice president for finance, opened the two-day tournament which also features 20-under class.

4 rookies bag Ford slots

ROOKIES JOWARD POLICARPIO, NIÑO CARLO Carlo Corpus, Terence Lallave and Jon Tyreh Esguerra have qualified for slots in the Ford Focus Novice Cup, organized by the Tuason Racing School (TRS), in August. TRS founder and racing champion JP Tuason said the four aspirants recently completed basic and advanced circuit training at the Subic International Raceway. The event was backed by Addict Mobile, eStandard Insurance Corp., Petron Ultron, Bosch, Goodyear, ROTA, Oakley, Trade Show, Ford Racing, Red Horse Beer, H&R Springs, Starbright Body Kits, Trapik.com, Manila Speedzone, C! Magazine, Philippine Star, Palmer-Asia Inc., Sikkens, Bilstein Shock Absorbers and K&N filters.

Pacquiao entry favored

ALL EYES WILL BE ON THE WAR BIRDS OF boxing hero Manny Pacquiao when the Pinoy Cockers Association of the Philippines (PCAP) Championship 8-cock derby kicks off tonight at the Makati Coliseum. The two-day event is the final leg in the PCAP series that will determine the Cocker of the Year. Pacquiao's Super Pacman leads the race with 38 points, followed by Richard Bates and Col. Nicetas Katigbak (36), Jake Macasaet (34.5), Butchoy Olano (33) and Gov. Ito Ynares (32.5). The Cocker of the Year winner will receive P2 million from the WTJ Sports and Amusement Corp. and B-Meg Derby Ace.

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Recycled Larios is both tiger and lamb

BARE EYE

Recab Trinidad

THE DAY AFTER OSCAR LARIOS WAS REported to be training crazy like a horse, the Mexican fighter supposedly broke the ribs of a Japanese sparmate.

International boxing judge Salven Lagumbay identified the Larios victim as WBC bantamweight champion Hozumi Hasegawa, whose scheduled titular defense had to be moved to a later date.

There was stormy weather yesterday, the scheduled arrival date of Larios from Tokyo.

Drumbeaters for the July 2 *Mano a Mano* could go use the weather disturbance and claim the Mexican has also kicked up a storm upon stepping on Philippine soil.

This should add a lot to the intrigue and excitement now brewing over the Manny Pacquiao-Larios rivalry.

* * *

Anyway, after all's said and done, it cannot be said that Pacquiao has not been properly warned about the enemy.

The recycled warrior from Guadalajara, we had been pointing out, would be coming tough as old meat.

For one, it was easy giving an apt tag to sell Larios, a rare package of horsepower and gamy toughness.

But ABS-CBN, which is bankrolling the big card at the Big Dome, has boldly chosen Mexican Pitbull for the battle-scarred Mexican.

This was meant to send the message Larios could really bite hard?

* * *

Countless Pacquiao devotees, naturally, have been very worried about the next outing of their hero.

Truth is, out there at the Pacquiao camp, they were already busy choosing the weapons against the intruding Mex.

You see, Pacquiao loves to feast on his foes inside the ring.

He's the stormy sort of warrior who never hesitates to rage, jump in and crush foes the moment he smells an opening.

Pacquiao, no doubt, will show up for the Sunday lunchtime duel wielding either a bludgeon or an axe, maybe both.

* * *

However, a close review of Larios on tapes, courtesy of ABS-CBN and RPN 9, would bare that all Pacquiao may need is his old, reliable left hook.

A lot has been said about Pacman's vicious right hand, a brand new weapon that was fully flashed in his epic conquest of Erik Morales in Las Vegas last January.

Against Larios though, that right hand may have to be utilized, but mainly to bomb the body.

What should really do the trick is a follow-up snapshot to the chin using the Pacman's feared, tested left.

Larios may have indeed worked himself hoarse (pardon the pun) in a bid to fulfill his vow to take Pacquiao's head home.

He is also being fueled by the dream of national delirium in Mexico, where there's a scream for revenge after Pacquiao had shamed and devastated two Aztec monuments to boxing, namely Erik Morales and Marco Antonio Barrera.

But, in order to fulfill his dream, Larios should be required to instantly develop a new weapon.

No, correction. Larios should instead be pushed hard to come up with a new shield, to toughen the armory, not the artillery.

* * *

This urgent point was brought up not to diminish the true worth of the visiting Mexican, but to properly warn him.

That sharp spear of a flashy Larios right hand is one of the best in the business.

However, a closer scrutiny of the fiery Mexican showed he also tends to receive as much as he gives.

Trainer Freddie Roach has issued advanced orders for Pacquiao to go for an early kill.

That said, there seems no way Larios could escape early bombardment to the body.

If Larios is to stay on his feet until the second half of the fight—to exploit possible Pacquiao fuel shortage—he must find a fool-proof protection for his chin.

This has to be pointed out because those clips of Larios on television showed glaring proof of that major defect.

He often, if not always, leaves the chin untended whenever he moves in to throw his right hand.

The peppery Mexican is a hot, hot chili, a tiger when attacking. However, he slips into sweet tamale, a soft, silly lamb whenever the need to defend arises.

Real Spicy too quick for Gran Copa rivals

By Musong R. Castillo

CARMONA, CAVITE—JUST TOO GOOD.

Real Spicy ran down a crack field with little effort yesterday to rule the 26th edition of the Gran Copa de Manila's Division I stakes in record style at the San Lazaro Leisure Park here.

The four-year-old chestnut horse showed he didn't have any problems winning despite a slow start under Jessie B. Guce, turning in eye-popping times in the middle three quarters before blitzing the field when it mattered.

He turned in a time of 1 minute and 48 seconds for a new record in the 1,750-meter distance, eclipsing the old mark held by imported charger Sexiest by two seconds even without tasting the whip.

Australian import Ever Mine Now checked in second, some 3 1/2 lengths behind, while Slatkis checked in third. Dream Cross was fourth, Hellfire fifth and La Tienne, Ever Mine Now's coupled entry, was sixth.

Speed Advantage, the only other local in the field aside from Real Spicy and Hellfire, was dead-last under Fernando M. Raquel Jr.

The win was also the seventh in as many starts for the offspring of Real Quiet out of Spicy Tale since January, and the record was the fourth that Real Spicy set after earlier setting new marks in the 1,450-, 1,500- and 1,600-meter distances.

"Yes, I think we now have a super horse," trainer Jojie Panlilio told the INQUIRER after Real Spicy turned in phenomenal quarter times of 9, 24, 24.5, 24.5 and 25.5 seconds.

FOURTH DISTANCE RECORD: Real Spicy heads for a superby victory in this file photo. ROGER MARGALLO

"He (Real Spicy) is in tremendous form and Jessie (Guce, the rider) told me that he even slowed down his mount."

Owner Hermie Esguerra, though, was conspicuously absent during the awards rites and refused to take telephone calls for interviews.

A source close to Esguerra, however, told the INQUIRER that he was not happy with the way the organizers handled the Gran Copa, which, in the past years, had been the highlight of the racing season at the Manila Jockey Club.

The win was worth "only" P290,000, counting the P150,000 the Philippine Racing Commission added to the day's regular prize.

Daily double sales also paled in comparison to pools in the past. This year's race grossed a total of P777,118, with Real Spicy cornering P589,621.

Panlilio said Real Spicy will continue to run at least once a month.

MILO MARATHON

De Asis, Tolentino rule Cavite elims

CAVITE CITY—JUJET DE ASIS snapped a long drought and Ellen Tolentino won her seventh straight regional title yesterday to share honors in the seventh qualifying run of the 30th National Milo Marathon here.

The 25-year-old de Asis, a member of the Philippine Army who has been campaigning in this annual foot race since 1999, captured his first leg title in seven years by rallying to nip Rogelio Sarmiento in the final two kilometers of the 21K race.

"He (Sarmiento) took the lead quite early," said De Asis in Filipino. "That's why he faded in the closing kilometers."

De Asis, who hails from Sultan Kudarat but is now stationed in Taguig, clocked 1-hour, 11 minutes and 20 seconds.

Sarmiento crossed the finish line 20 seconds behind while Gerald Sabal, younger brother of reigning Milo Marathon king and national record holder Cresenciano Sabal, checked in third at 1:13:15.

All three runners advanced to the National Finals scheduled in Manila on Dec. 10.

Tolentino was virtually unchallenged in the distaff side of event held in partnership with Bayview Park Hotel-Manila, Adidas, Cebu Pacific, Department of Tourism and Powerbar.

JUJET de Asis and Ellen Tolentino show their trophies

The 22-year-old Tolentino turned in a time of 1:33:50. The student of De La Salle-Dasmarinas captured four straight crowns in her home town of Cagayan de Oro City before topping the Lipa City stage last year.

Adjennie delos Santos placed second in 1:47:17 and Maricar Simstman was third in 1:57:36.

Cavite City Mayor Bernardo "Toti" Paredes and Vice Mayor Dino Chua helped Milo Sports Events Executive Pat Goc-ong in awarding the trophies and medals to the winners.

The 21K champions also won P10,000 each while the second and third placers pocketed P6,000 and P4,000, respectively.

Aljean Diente topped the men's 5K race while Frejelyn Roncales ruled the women's division.

Del Rosario, Ang share Rider-of-Year title

SUBIC—WORLD JET SKI RUNNER-UP PAUL del Rosario and Networx Jetsports-Gerry's Grill protégé BJ Ang swept their respective divisions and emerged co-Riders of the Year in yesterday's highly-successful close to the 2006 Petron Jet Ski National Series at the Waterfront Beach here.

This marks the first time in the 12-year history of the Jet Sports Association of the Philippines' series that two riders shared the title.

Del Rosario, the back-to-back champion in 1999 and 2000, bagged his unprecedented third Rider of the Year award after his sweep of the Expert Open 1200 Unlimited class over 1997 champion and JSAP vice-president John Dee of Intex Marketing and Development Corp.

He also bagged the Stand-Up class crown over Carlo Garcia and Dee, and the overall Open Sport title over Alex Isip and newcomer JR Pineda.

The 21-year-old Ang also made history as the youngest to win the Rider of the Year title after ruling all the races in the Expert Roundabout 800 Open over Harley David and Excel Torres.

IRREPRESSIBLE: Del Rosario shows his winning form in the Stand-Up class.

Sharing the limelight was Michael Mangio who clinched the Novice Rider of the Year honors over Robbie David and Dax Figueroa with his sweep in the Novice 4-Strokes division.

"This indicates that jetski races have gone to a higher level," said JSAP president Dong Arcilla.

Winning the other titles were Darlene Carbungco-Isip and Figueroa.

Carbungco-Isip, the 2001 Mutya ng Pilipinas winner, only ended second for the day but went home with the overall Women's Runabout crown while Figueroa bagged the Novice 2 Strokes title.

Pulling the day's biggest surprise was the comebacking Benz Que, who upstaged Paul del Rosario and Alex Isip to top the Open Sports class.

The series, sponsored by SBMA, Networx Jetsports, Denso, Courtyard Inn, Premiere Ready Mix, WOW!, Jetski-Puerto Galera, Subic Homes, Cars and Cycles Autocenter and Gerry's Grill, was also supported by Ford Global City, Pacific Armoring and Glass Corporation, Intex-Boating World, Alex Car Restoration Service, Subic Homes, Petron Lakeshore Toll Service Facility, HSD Iced Products, Goped-Asia, Hizon Laboratories, Amarula, Jager Meister, Irma Fishing, Top Gear and Stoplight TV.

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A Cup full of surprises

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

GHANA, WHICH HAS NO HOUSEHOLD names in the sport of football, is by far the most accomplished African nation in the 2006 Fifa World Cup: It qualified for the round of 16 by posting two well-deserved victories in Cologne, Germany.

But despite a good start, Ghana is still not in the league of powerhouse teams from South America and Europe, the only two continents that have produced World Cup champions. Still, those who had smirked at Ghana's chances are now laughing on the other side of their faces after they had wrongly predicted that the Western African nation would finish dead-last in its group (Group E) behind world No. 2 Czech Republic, Italy and the United States in the qualifying matches.

Ghana, so deft and quick, beat the Czech Republic and the US and moved into the second round, toting 6 points behind a remarkable 2-win, 1-loss record. The Western African nation finished second behind Italy, which topped the group with 7 points (two wins and one draw), while the Czech Republic (3) and the US (1) were booted out.

Okay, five-time champion Brazil, with the great Ronaldo showing no signs of slowing, leads the favorites together with Argentina, England and host Germany. However, Ghana, which faces Brazil on Tuesday (Wednesday in Manila) has already assured itself of a place in World Cup history, win or lose.

After dropping its maiden game to Italy, Ghana bounced back with a shocking 2-0 win over Czech Republic. Then Ghana defeated the US, 2-1, to seal a spot in the round of 16.

Following Ghana's upset win over the Czechs, people in the capital city of Accra poured into the streets screaming, dancing and waving flags. Ghana's improbable victory was all the more extraordinary as the Czechs had looked unbeatable in thrashing the US booters, 3-0, in their first game. Little-known Asamoah Gyan booted in an early goal for Ghana, which is making its World Cup debut. In the second half Gyan missed a penalty kick, but Ghana still won the match with eight minutes left when Sulley Muntari scored another.

Thirty two teams are taking part in the quadrennial World Cup. Fourteen are from Europe, four from South America, five from Africa, four from Asia, four from North and Central America and one from Oceania. Six of these teams are making their debut and there are expectations that some of these outsiders could follow the example set in the 2002 World Cup in Seoul by the lightly-regarded African nation Senegal, which upset defending champion France in the very first game of the tournament, and co-host South Korea, which made it into the semifinals. Senegal failed to qualify in the tournament this time and South Korea was eliminated after a 2-0 loss to Switzerland on Friday. That left Ghana to carry the fight for the outsiders.

I expect these players from Africa and Asia to do better in future World Cup tournaments. With the training and international experience they're getting, they should start winning more World Cup games. Physically, they're there, although technically they're far behind.

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Text betting for Pacquiao-Larios tiff

TEXT YOUR BETS, PLEASE.

Boxing fans can bet on the Manny Pacquiao-Oscar Larios superfeatherweight clash through a local telecom service provider that came up with a promo combining the popular texting with Las Vegas-style sports betting.

Text Entertainment Games (E-Games), in partnership with ABS-CBN, has launched Mano Milyonaryo, a promo that gives the mobile phone user a chance to place their bets and win more than P1.5 million in cash prizes.

Registrants are entitled to P20 worth of free load. Players can also purchase E-Games cards from SM Mega Cellular Load Central and all customer service centers of Robinson's Malls.

Entries will be received starting 12 midnight of June 26 until 6 p.m. of July 1.

Each text costs P10 and a prize of P1 million awaits the lucky texter. From the correct entries, 14 players will be randomly chosen to move on to the raffle draw. Players with correct entries will be informed through text message.

SPORTS

GERMANY'S fans celebrate after the final whistle during a screening of the World Cup soccer match against Sweden on the Strasse des 17 Juni boulevard at the so-called 'Fan Mile' in Berlin. REUTERS

Netherlands needs Ruud awakening vs Portugal

NUREMBERG, GERMANY—NETHERLANDS coach Marco van Basten was wrong to criticize star striker Ruud van Nistelrooy in public before confronting the player himself.

It doesn't necessarily mean the Manchester United forward will start Sunday in the Netherlands' second-round match against Portugal.

"I didn't do the right thing," Van Basten said Saturday. "The order in which things happened should have been different."

Van Basten's criticism at an international press conference Thursday reached Van Nistelrooy even before the coach had returned to the team's training camp.

"He was not happy. He thought it was sad, but such is sport," Van Basten said.

The two had a heart-to-heart talk late Thursday and Van Basten hopes it will help Van Nistelrooy. Van Basten said the player agreed to "do everything to play a bit better."

Van Nistelrooy scored one goal in three games, but was substituted in all. Altogether, the Dutch have scored just three goals in as many matches.

Starting without Van Nistelrooy would be a turnaround for Van Basten, who guaranteed him a place in the Dutch team even when he was benched by Manchester United coach Alex Ferguson earlier this year. *AP*

Germans roll into World Cup last 8

Use early assault to oust Swedes

MUNICH, GERMANY—THE game plan was to apply pressure from the start and score an early goal.

Mission accomplished.

Germany is in the quarterfinals of the World Cup and beginning to look and talk like a contender after a 2-0 victory over Sweden. Juergen Klinsmann's team needed only 12 minutes to break down the Swedes for a confidence-boosting win over one of the traditionally top European sides.

"I can't remember the last time Germany played such a first 30 minutes. It was fantastic," Klinsmann said.

Lukas Podolski scored both goals, in the fourth and 12th minutes, with his forward partner Miroslav Klose playing a big role. Podolski now has three goals in the tournament and the two have combined for seven.

Germany, 4-0 in the tournament, next plays in Berlin on Friday against Argentina, which beat Mexico 2-1 in extra time. The two teams met in the 1986 and 1990 finals with each team winning once.

"We played Argentina twice in the past two years and we drew both times in very good games. We have no fear," Klinsmann said. "We are three-time champions, we are playing at home. It won't end in the quarterfinals."

Defender Teddy Lucic was sent off in the 35th for two yellow cards, and striker Henrik Larsson sent a penalty kick over the bar in the 53rd to make matters worse for an overmatched Swedish team.

"We scored two quick goals and that gave us confidence," Podolski said. "We were lucky with that penalty, but we deserved to win."

Klinsmann took over the team two years ago, promising to bring Germany its fourth World Cup title. It may not have been an empty promise, although future opponents figure to provide much tougher tests.

The team was maligned before the World Cup after a string of lackluster warmup matches, and many Germans were skeptical of its chances. But the doubters have become believers and euphoric home crowds have lifted Germany's performances even more.

"We can be very pleased and proud of our performance," Klinsmann said.

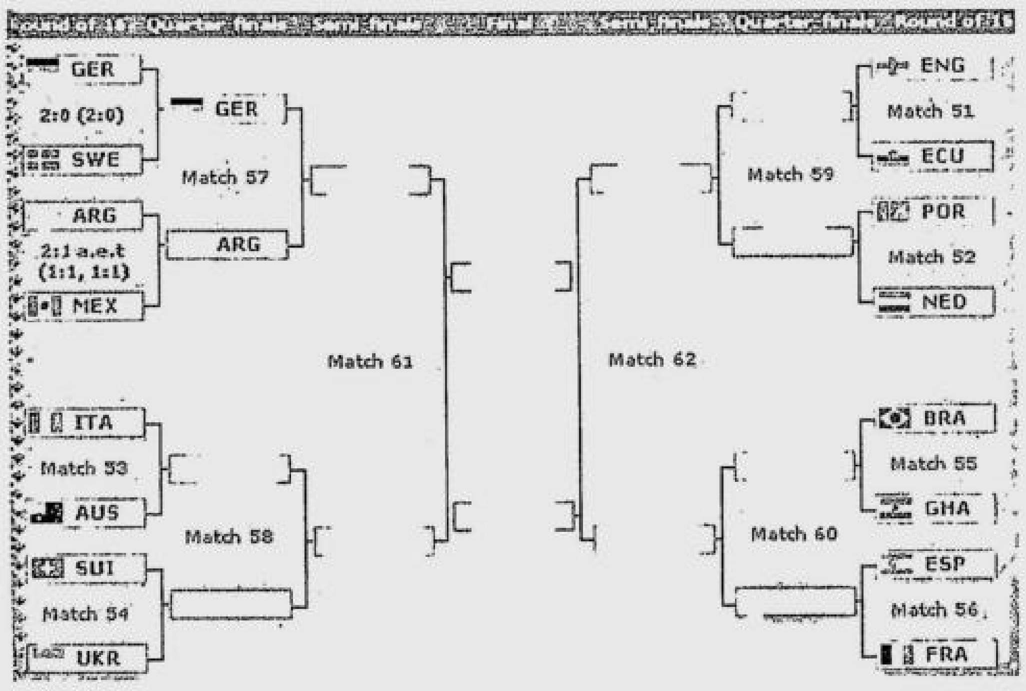
Germany certainly did get off to a flying start. Michael Ballack passed to Klose, who beat two defenders and cut inside but diving goalkeeper Andreas Isaksson made the initial save. The ball bounced back to Podolski, whose shot deflected off the head of Lucic and into the net.

PODOLSKI helps Germany end things early vs Sweden. REUTERS

The second score was prettier.

Klose got a pass just outside the box, drew three defenders and slipped a pass into space for Podolski, who drove a left-footed shot past the goalkeeper in the 12th.

"Berlin, Berlin, we're going to Berlin," the crowd began singing. They might have meant for Friday's game—or for the July 9 final in the German capital. *AP*



Graphics by fifaworldcup.yahoo.com

Argentina bundles out Mexico

LEIPZIG, GERMANY—A BLAST OF BRILliance by Maxi Rodriguez separated Argentina from Mexico in a World Cup classic Saturday.

Argentina moved into the quarterfinals with a 2-1 victory on Rodriguez's goal in the 98th minute of the first extra-time game in the tournament. Rodriguez chested a long, arcing pass from captain Juan Pablo Sorin at the right corner of the penalty area and, in almost the same motion, wheeled and volleyed a soaring left-footed shot to the far portion of the net over goalkeeper Oswaldo Sanchez.

"I had not decided to shoot it, but the ball fell right in front of me," Rodriguez said. "It's one of those shots that can go into the stands or in the goal."

The Argentines weren't too exhausted to celebrate, mobbing Rodriguez after his third goal of the tournament—and biggest of his life. Still, Argentina had to stave off Mexico for another 22 minutes.

At the end, several Mexican players were crying.

Mario Mendez kicked the turf at the center of the field, walking glumly for the sideline. Teammate Francisco Fonseca sat nearby, staring up into the stands.

Behind him, bare-chested Argentina players twirled their shirts in the air, some dropping to their knees to salute their fans—and each other.

"Truly, it's incredible, a beautiful goal," Rodriguez said.

Next up for Argentina is a match with Germany in Berlin on Friday. Argentina and Germany met in the 1986 and 1990 finals, splitting titles.

"We saw them a little," Rodriguez said of Germany's 2-0 win over Sweden earlier Saturday, "but I think Argentina can beat anybody."

Two-time champion Argentina lost in the 1998 quarterfinals and was knocked out in the first round four years ago. This time, Argentina topped its group before barely getting past a Mexican team that struggled to finish second in its opening-round group, then found its rhythm against the heavy favorite.

Until Rodriguez's stunning shot, it was an almost dead-even game of attrition. Both teams scored early, with Rafael Marquez putting Mexico ahead in the sixth minute and Hernan Crespo equalizing in the 10th. *AP*

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An era ends as Agassi announces retirement

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CORPORATE PARTNER
KEEP WALKING
JOHNNIE WALKER

AGASSI: Will try to enjoy Wimbledon one last time. AP

WIMBLEDON, ENGLAND—ANDRE Agassi's voice wavered and his eyes welled up. After years of dealing with injuries, after months of contemplation, he finally spoke the words he knew he had to, at the place he knew he had to.

Turning what was expected to be a routine pre-Wimbledon news conference into something significant, Agassi announced Saturday he will retire after this year's US Open, leaving tennis after two decades during which he collected a career Grand Slam and morphed from "Image Is Everything" brashness to elder statesman.

"It's been a lot of sacrifices the last few months, trying to get myself right to come back here and enjoy this tournament for the last time," said Agassi, who has played only one match the past three months because of back trouble.

"It's been a long road this year for me, and for a lot of reasons. It's great to be here. This Wimbledon will be my last, and the US Open will be my last tournament."

The 36-year-old American is seeded 25th at the All England Club, where play begins Monday. He intends to enter as many as four hardcourt events between Wimbledon and the Open, in what will amount to a farewell tour for one of the most popular and successful tennis players in history.

"He'll go down as one of the guys who changed our sport in a lot of ways, not only the way he played the game, but also the way he had conducted himself on and off the court," Lleyton Hewitt said. *AP*

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Lady Stags target finals berth

SAN SEBASTIAN SHOOTS FOR A PLAYOFF FOR THE LAST FINALS berth as it plays Far Eastern U today at the close of the semifinal round of the V-League presented by Shakey's at the Blue Eagle Gym. Relegated to No. 3 spot following back-to-back losses, Lady Stags try to go for their fifth victory against the Lady Tams in their 12 noon duel to avail themselves of the league's 5-of-8 incentive for a crack at the second championship slot. Adamson has taken the second spot with a 9-5 card even as it closes out its semis campaign against first finalist De La Salle at 2 p.m. in what could be a preview of the championship. A San Sebastian loss, however, will pave the way for the DLSU-Adamson showdown for the championship in this event presented by Shakey's Pizza and presented by Sports Vision.

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor **Emmie G. Velarde**

nt name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) and 283 (Smart) **or email us at** pr_entertainment@inquirer.com.ph

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SHE SAYS it's not true that President Arroyo got sick after eating in her restaurant.

Ara Mina cries 'foul'

By Nini Valera

"IT'S JUST SO UNFAIR!"

This was Ara Mina's reaction to news reports that President Arroyo was rushed to St. Luke's Hospital for food poisoning on Thursday night after dining in Osteria 88, a restaurant she co-owns with non-show biz partners.

"She was already feeling sick when she arrived," Ara recounted. "She did not touch any of the food that my chef (Rae Pedrosa) served to her party."

Presidential Chief of Staff Michael Defensor said in earlier reports that the President ate the salad served at the dinner, a pre-birthday bash for First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo. Members of the Arroyo Cabinet were in attendance.

"The reports have caused a huge damage to the restaurant," Ara told INQUIRER Entertainment in a phone interview on Saturday.

The food—salad, fish and ozo bucco, and desert—served at the top-level party were all on the menu, she said.

"Reporters should have first checked with us about what exactly happened, before they wrote their stories," Ara said. "No one called to clarify anything."

She said reservations were made for the party of the First Gentleman, who had dined in the restaurant a few times in the past.

"But it was the first time for President Arroyo," Ara recounted. "It was unfortunate

IT'S JUST/ A2-3

Happily ignoring protests

By Marinel R. Cruz

TAKE FIVE

SINGER RACHELLE ANN Go says she is so ecstatic about her Favorite Female Artist award from Myx Channel, that even protesting fans of other nominees cannot bring her down.

At a celebration lunch that Viva Records hosted for her, entertainment writers sought Rachelle Ann's reaction to rumors that fans of the other contenders—Sarah Geronimo, Nina, Barbie Almalbis and Kitchie Nadal—were complaining about her victory.

"You win this award through text votes," was Rachelle Ann's sharp reply. "I'd like to think I won because a lot of people supported me, and for that I'm happy."

She added: "So far, I've not been confronted with any such complaints. But should that happen, I'm sure I'd just ignore them."

Rachelle Ann said she was also happy that boyfriend, Christian Bautista, bagged a trophy himself. Christian shared the Best Collaboration Award with Nina for their version of "Burn."

"I voted for Christian, too," Rachelle Ann said, beaming.

How are you and Christian these days?

We're going into our fourth month together. I can say it's been smooth sailing... except these days, we're both busy. He recently left for the United States for a show. While he was there, he congratulated me through a text message. I missed him a lot.

Has Christian introduced you to his parents? What was that like?

Yes, he has, but it wasn't something formal. It's like when I visited their house, they (Christian's parents) already knew. I call him B—short for Baby—or Yani, his nickname. Christian calls me Shin, which is what people at home call me.

Did the fact that Mark Bautista, your co-host in "ASAP," tried to court you affect your professional relationship

HAPPILY/ A2-3

RACHELLE ANN GO JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

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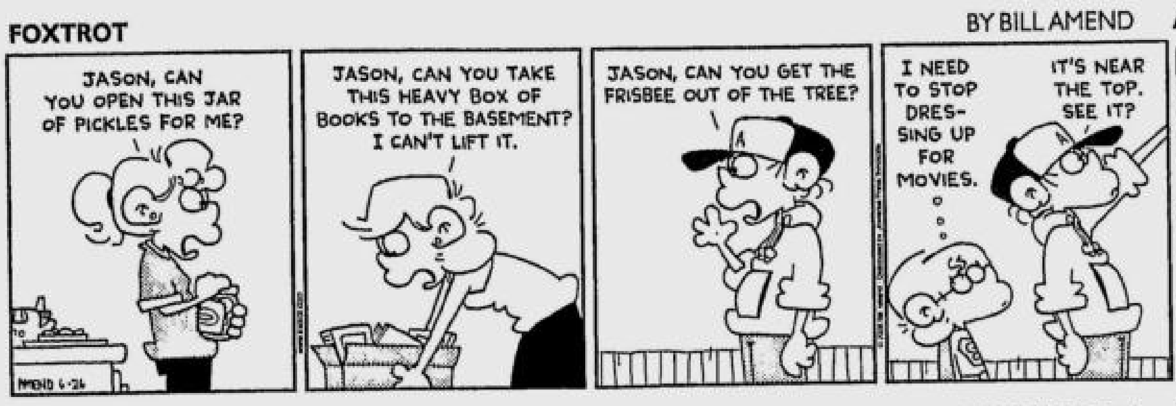
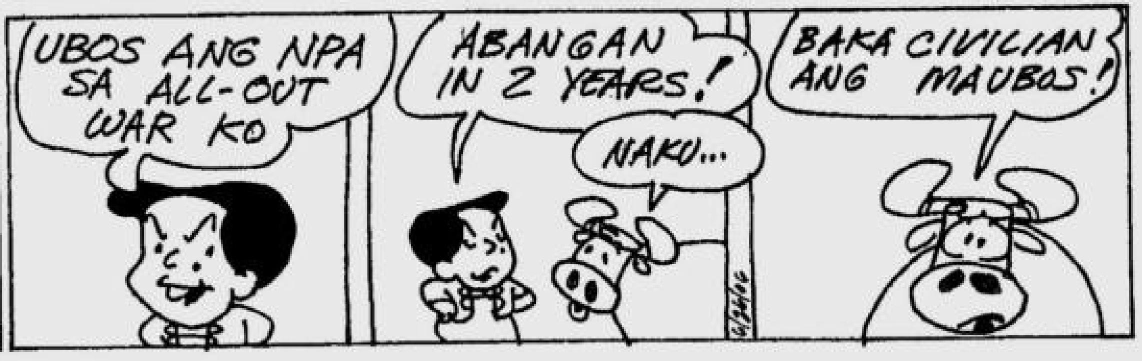
BY BILL AMEND


JASON, CAN YOU OPEN THIS JAR OF PICKLES FOR ME?
JASON, CAN YOU TAKE THIS HEAVY BOX OF BOOKS TO THE BASEMENT? I CAN'T LIFT IT.
JASON, CAN YOU GET THE FRISBEE OUT OF THE TREE?
I NEED TO STOP DRESSING UP FOR MOVIES.
IT'S NEAR THE TOP. SEE IT?
AMEND 6-26

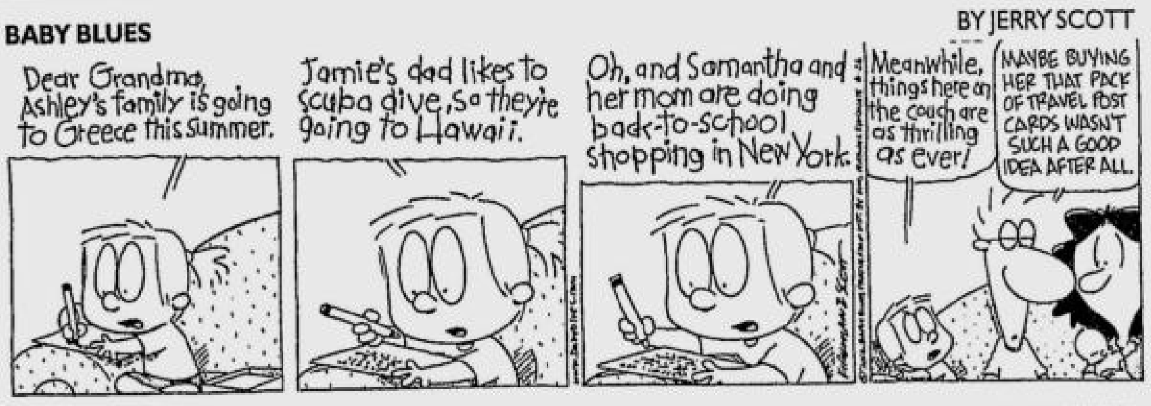
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


UBOS ANG NPA SA ALL-OUT WAR KO
ABANGAN IN 2 YEARS!
NAKU...
BAKA CIVILIAN ANG MAUBOS!

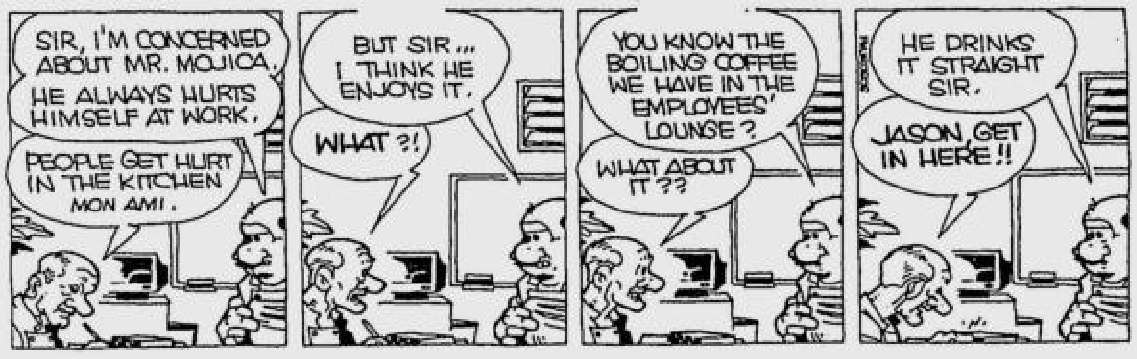
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


Dear Grandma, Ashley's family is going to Greece this summer.
Jamie's dad likes to scuba dive, so they're going to Hawaii.
Oh, and Samantha and her mom are doing back-to-school shopping in New York.
Meanwhile, things here on the couch are as thrilling as ever!
MAYBE BUYING HER THAT PACK OF TRAVEL POST CARDS WASN'T SUCH A GOOD IDEA AFTER ALL.

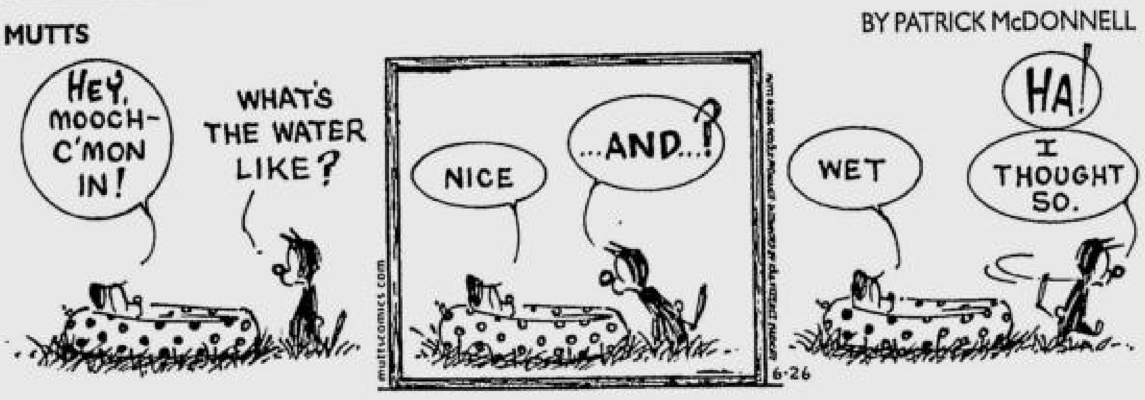
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


SIR, I'M CONCERNED ABOUT MR. MOJICA.
HE ALWAYS HURTS HIMSELF AT WORK.
PEOPLE GET HURT IN THE KITCHEN MON AMI.
BUT SIR... I THINK HE ENJOYS IT.
WHAT ?!
YOU KNOW THE BOILING COFFEE WE HAVE IN THE EMPLOYEES' LOUNGE?
WHAT ABOUT IT ??
HE DRINKS IT STRAIGHT SIR.
JASON, GET IN HERE!!

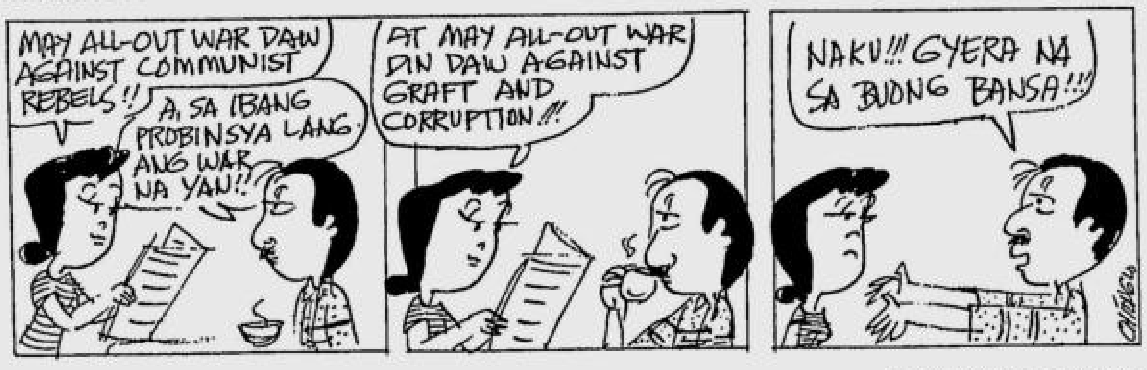
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


HEY, MOOCH-C'MON IN!
WHAT'S THE WATER LIKE?
NICE
...AND...?
WET
HA!
I THOUGHT SO.
6-26

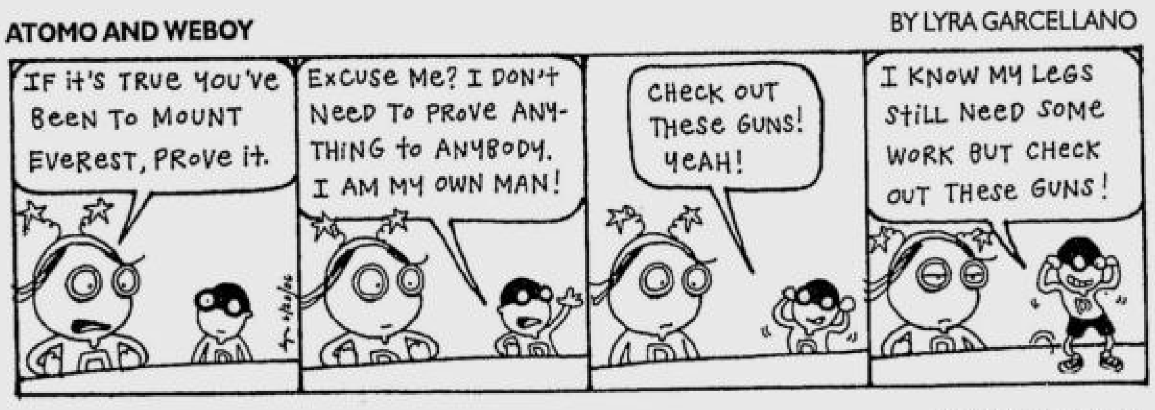
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


MAY ALL-OUT WAR DAW AGAINST COMMUNIST REBELS!!
A, SA IBANG PROBINSYA LANG ANG WAR NA YAN!!
AT MAY ALL-OUT WAR DIN DAW AGAINST GRAFT AND CORRUPTION!!!
NAKU!!! GYERA NA SA BUONG BANSA!!!

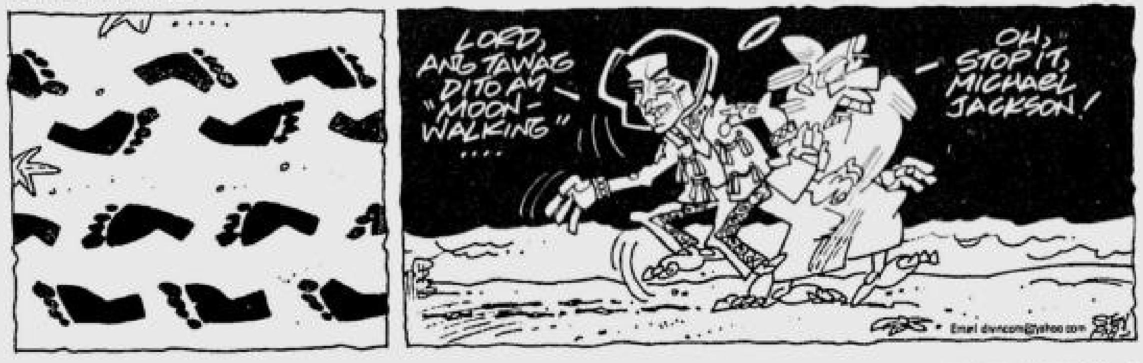
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


IF it's TRUE you've Been To MOUNT Everest, PRove it.
Excuse Me? I Don't Need To Prove ANYTHING to ANYBODY. I AM MY OWN MAN!
Check out These Guns! Yeah!
I Know My Legs still Need some work But check out These Guns!

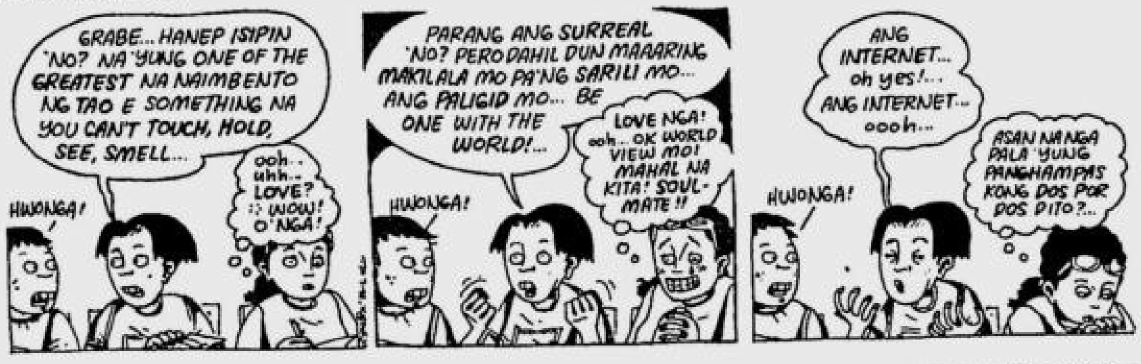
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


LORD, ANG TAWAG DITO AY "MOON-WALKING"....
OH, STOP IT, MICHAEL JACKSON!
Email divncom@yahoo.com

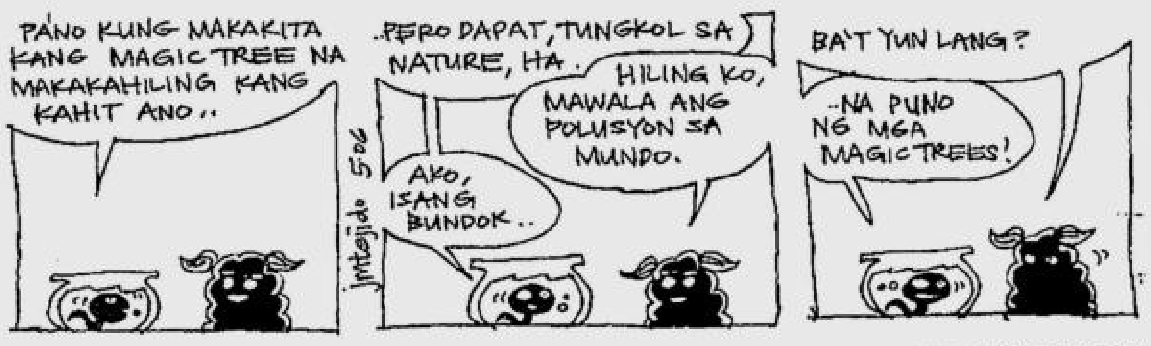
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


GRABE... HANEP ISIPIN 'NO? NA 'YUNG ONE OF THE GREATEST NA NAIMBENTO NG TAO E SOMETHING NA YOU CAN'T TOUCH, HOLD, SEE, SMELL...
HWONGA!
ooh.. uhh.. LOVE? :: WOW! O'NGA!
PARANG ANG SURREAL 'NO? PERO DAHIL DUN MAAARING MAKILALA MO PA'NG SARILI MO... ANG PALIGID MO... BE ONE WITH THE WORLD!...
HWONGA!
LOVE NGA! ooh.. OK WORLD VIEW MO! MAHAL NA KITA! SOUL-MATE!!
ANG INTERNET... oh yes!... ANG INTERNET... oooh...
HWONGA!
ASAN NA NGA PALA 'YUNG PANGHAMPAS KONG DOS POR DOS DITO?...

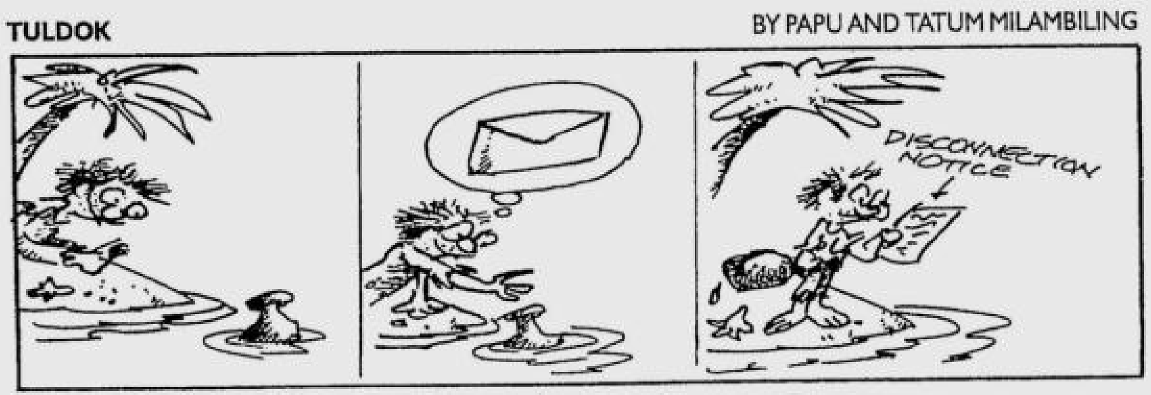
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


PA'NO KUNG MAKAKITA KANG MAGIC TREE NA MAKAKAHILING KANG KAHIT ANO..
..PERO DAPAT, TUNGKOL SA NATURE, HA.
HILING KO, MAWALA ANG POLUSYON SA MUNDO.
AKO, ISANG BUNDOK..
BA'T YUN LANG?
..NA PUNO NG MGA MAGIC TREES!

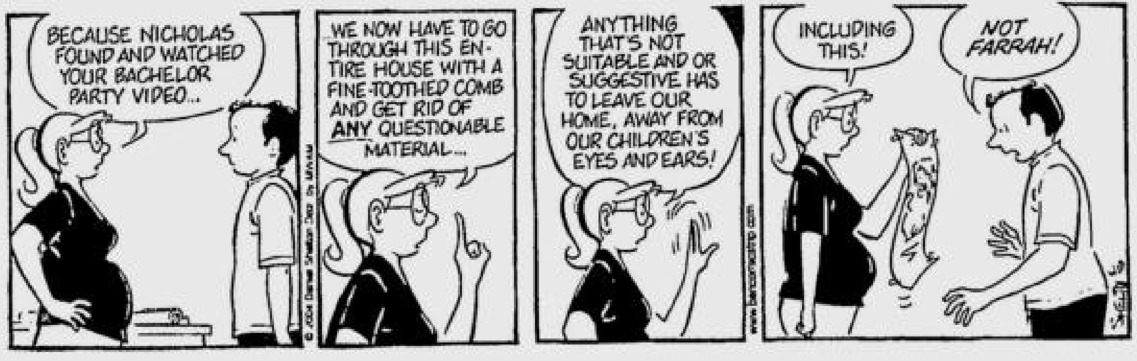
TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


DISCONNECTION NOTICE

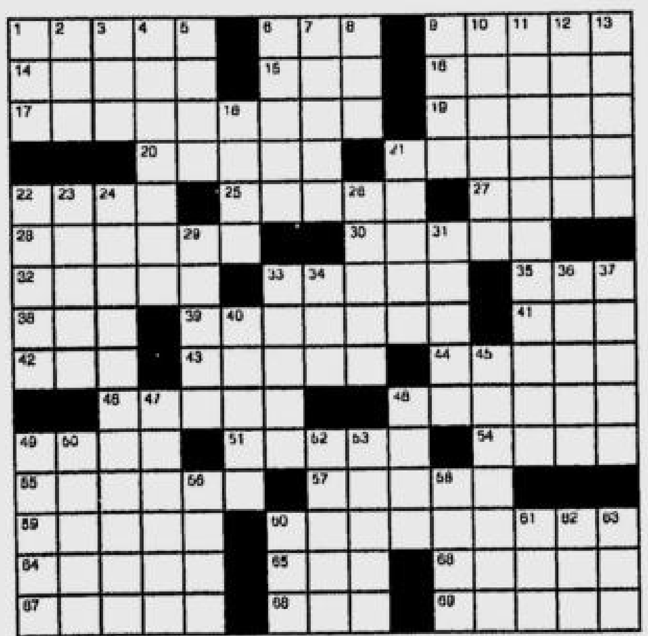
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


BECAUSE NICHOLAS FOUND AND WATCHED YOUR BACHELOR PARTY VIDEO...
WE NOW HAVE TO GO THROUGH THIS ENTIRE HOUSE WITH A FINE-TOOTHED COMB AND GET RID OF ANY QUESTIONABLE MATERIAL...
ANYTHING THAT'S NOT SUITABLE AND OR SUGGESTIVE HAS TO LEAVE OUR HOME, AWAY FROM OUR CHILDREN'S EYES AND EARS!
INCLUDING THIS!
NOT FARRAH!

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Wood files
6 Healthful getaway
9 Fire starter
14 Musical lead-in
15 Sleeve filler
16 Pocatello's state
17 Scram!
19 Soft drinks
20 Trapped in branches
21 Least adorned
22 Extra
25 Bakery enticement
27 Has a snack
28 Mistreated
30 Grip of the hand
32 Gossipy gal
33 Soft footwear
35 Cape Horn tribesman
38 "Be Prepared" org.
39 Amscray!
41 Pattern of intrigue?
42 Pickled delicacy
43 Too tubby?
44 Red-faced
46 Met production
48 Powered bikes
49 Albacore in a can
51 Type of salts
54 Saroyan's "My Name Is __"
55 Actress Bergman
57 Capital of Jordan
59 Having prongs
60 Vamoose!
64 Square things
65 Coop cackler
66 More impolite
67 Small salamanders
68 Part of CBS?
69 Fencing foils



By Jim Page
New York, NY

6/26/06

DOWN
1 Carnival city, briefly
2 Raggedy doll
3 Sloppy digs
4 Squawk
5 Like old milk
6 Carpenter, at times
7 Madrid museum
8 One of Alcott's women
9 Complex silicate
10 Idolizes
11 Disappear!
12 Storage box
13 Emcees
18 Enjoy a novel
21 Mound mistakes
22 It's possible
23 Too tubby
24 Off with you!
26 Hatfield foe
29 Bald raptor
31 "The Jetsons" dog
33 Wristwatch element
34 Part of GOP
36 Pagliacci's beloved
37 Chasm
40 Handled like a jug
45 Legit state
47 Allowance provider
48 CCCL times X
49 Satellite of Saturn
50 Join forces
52 Rice liquors
53 Auguries
56 Fateful date for Caesar
58 Berne's river
60 That girl
61 Ike
62 Spike or Pinky
63 Pause fillers

Saturday's Puzzle Solved

S	U	M	A	C	■	E	L	A	B	O	R	A	T	E
E	N	O	C	H	■	C	A	M	E	R	A	M	A	N
E	D	U	C	E	■	C	H	I	N	A	W	A	R	E
D	E	S	E	R	T	E	R	S	■	■	■	T	O	M
C	R	E	S	T	S	■	■	S	U	A	V	I	T	Y
A	L	T	S	■	A	R	C	■	R	B	I	■	■	■
S	I	R	■	T	R	O	U	B	L	E	S	P	O	T
E	N	A	T	E	■	O	R	O	■	L	E	A	V	E
S	E	P	A	R	A	T	I	O	N	S	■	V	E	R
■	■	■	H	R	S	■	A	S	O	■	F	I	R	S
S	P	I	R	E	A	S	■	■	S	T	O	L	L	E
T	A	S	■	■	■	H	I	B	E	R	N	I	A	N
O	P	E	R	A	T	I	V	E	■	A	D	O	R	E
P	A	R	T	N	E	R	E	D	■	L	A	N	G	S
S	W	E	E	T	N	E	S	S	■	A	S	S	E	S

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6/26/06

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You have enormous willpower and courage. Very little daunts you. Although sensitive, you appear confident and strong. You're physical in your approach to life. You're a great planner and are well-organized, which makes you excel in many different fields. You're also interested in food. Work hard to construct or build something this year. (You'll get your rewards.)
Birthdate of: Babe Didrikson Zaharias, golfer; Sean Hayes, actor; Chris O'Donnell, actor.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Surprise guests or new technology at home could be exciting or different in some way today. Something unexpected will happen at home to shake up your routine. (Maybe your alarm fails to go off.)

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Expect to meet new people or see a new side of someone you already know. Siblings might also have a little surprise for you today. (You might learn something curious and fascinating.)

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Be mindful of your money and your possessions today. You might find something new (oh joy!), or you might lose something (oh no!). Stay alert and count your change in stores.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): You feel restless and energetic this morning. Something unusual might occur today. You can almost sense it, like electricity in the air. What will it be?

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): You might encounter a few surprises when dealing with the government or large institutions today. (Or maybe not.) However, something makes you feel a bit restless and vaguely nervous. (No big deal.)

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): A friend could surprise you today. Alternatively, you might meet someone new who is surprising! Either way, you'll find people very interesting today.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Unexpected news from a parent, boss or teacher could catch you off-guard, especially this morning. Be ready to jump in either direction. Remain open to all possibilities.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Sudden news about travel, education or perhaps something in the media is surprising today. If you have an unexpected opportunity to travel or expand your education, grab it!

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): You might learn an interesting secret today, especially about other people's earnings or what other people own. This might or might not impact you.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): A close friend or partner might say something that catches you off-guard. You weren't expecting this reaction. Be ready to compromise. Show others how open-minded you are.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Power outages, computer breakdowns and glitches with electronics at work are possible today. You might even have to deal with a fire alarm. (Small potatoes.)

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Parents must be vigilant and patient with children, especially this morning. Stress could produce accident-prone situations. On the bright side, unexpected flirtations could delight you.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

				7	5		4	
		3		2		7		8
	4	7			3		5	
						1		6
6	2			8			3	9
7		1						
	9		1			6	2	
3		4		6		5		
	7		5	3				

Difficulty Level ★

6/26

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HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

2	6	1	4	8	5	7	9	3
3	7	8	9	2	1	6	5	4
4	9	5	3	6	7	8	2	1
5	4	9	2	1	8	3	6	7
1	8	7	6	5	3	2	4	9
6	2	3	7	9	4	5	1	8
8	3	6	1	4	2	9	7	5
7	1	2	5	3	9	4	8	6
9	5	4	8	7	6	1	3	2

Difficulty Level ★★★★★

RACHELLE Ann and Christian in Muscat, Oman, in May, their first trip abroad as sweethearts

Happily ignoring protests

From page A2-1

with him? There were rumors that you and Christian were avoiding Mark on the "ASAP" set.

That's not true. Christian and I never avoided him. In the beginning, we all felt uneasy. *Hindi na ngayon.* In fact, Mark and I just had a duet on "ASAP" last week. You know how it is on the set. Everyone's busy. *Puro takbuhan sa* backstage.

Do you still get nervous performing on stage?

Yes. It happens every time. What I do is drink a lot of water.

Are you coming out with a new album soon?

No new album yet, but we're planning on releasing my third single titled "Bakit?" It's a song I recorded with Chuckie Dreyfus. It's the only OPM in my "I Care" album.

Don't you plan on writing songs someday?

I tried to do that in high school. I wrote songs on a piece of paper, which I can't find anymore. Actually, what I wrote were poems. I had wanted to create melodies for them.

How do you feel about bands eclipsing solo performers nowadays? Weren't you a band member before?

It's true that bands are really 'in' these days. *Paikot-ikot lang naman 'yan.*

I used to be the group's drummer. But we did only one school program. I also know how to play the guitar—a little. My father tried to teach me when I was small. I didn't like it then; it hurt my fingers a lot.

Is there anything else you dream of doing professionally?

I want to do a musical similar to "Footloose." I'd like [my role] to be light, with a lot of dancing.

Ara Mina cries 'foul'

From page A2-1

that she turned ill while she was there. But I am certain it was not because of the food."

Before the restaurant was transformed into a members-only dining place and named Osteria 88, Ara was already having a hard time keeping the business afloat, she confided to INQUIRER Entertainment in earlier interviews.

Last year, she resorted to downsizing, dividing the restaurant into smaller areas that she leased to other food outlets, like a pastry shop and a coffee shop. Now, the restaurant can accommodate only about 60 people.

Ara said she hoped the negative publicity wouldn't kill the restaurant altogether.

"I've put a lot of love and effort into this," she said."

Before Ara started running the restaurant, she had considered putting up a spa.

Could she be regretting that decision now?

EASTWOOD CINEMAS

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For inquiries, call:
687-6963
GUARANTEED SEATS
MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

1 FAST & FURIOUS 3
1:20, 3:45, 6:10, 8:35, 11:00
PG-13

2 LAKE HOUSE
1:40, 4:00, 6:20, 8:40, 11:00
GP

3 SCARY MOVIE 4
12:05, 2:15, 4:25, 6:35, 8:45, 10:55
R-13

4 CARS
11:50, 2:30, 5:10, 7:50, 10:30
GP

SHANG CINEPLEX

1 LAKE HOUSE
MTRCB. GP
1:20, 3:30, 5:40, 7:50, 10:00

2 CARS
MTRCB. GP 11.50, 4:25
GARFIELD 2
MTRCB GP 2 30

3 SCARY MOVIE 4
MTRCB R-13
1 20, 3:30, 5:40, 7:50, 10:00

4 THE FAST AND THE FURIOUS: TOKYO DRIFT
MTRCB PG-13
12 20, 2 45, 5:10, 7:35, 10:00

PREMIERE THEATRE
AMERICAN HAUNTING
1 50, 3 45, 5 40, 7 35, 9 30
MTRCB PG-13

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Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND•EX

PACQUIAO THE MOVIE
PG13
3:00,5:20,7:40,10:00

SCARY MOVIE 4
R13
2:00,4:00,6:00, 8:00,10:00

THE FAST AND THE FURIOUS: TOKYO DRIFT
PG13
12:50,3:10,5:30, 7:50,10:10

THE LAKE HOUSE
PG13
1:20,3:30,5:40, 7:50,10:00

THE NUN
R13
1:25,3:30,5:35,7:40,9:45

CARS
GP
12:40
GARFIELD 2
G
3:10

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CINEMA 1 THE NUN
12:10 , 2:20 , 4:30
6:40 , 8:50
R13

CINEMA 2 CARS
11:40 , 2:15 , 4:50
7:25 , 10:00
GP

DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND•EX

PROMENADE
GREENHILLS
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NOW SHOWING

CINEMA 3 FAST & THE FURIOUS
11:30 , 1:50 , 4:10
6:30 , 8:50
PG13

CINEMA 4 SCARY MOVIE
10:40 , 1:00 , 3:15
5:30 , 7:45 , 10:00
R13

CINEMA 5 THE LAKE HOUSE
10:45 , 1:00 , 3:15
5:30 , 7:45 , 10:00
GP

TICKET PRICES & SCREENING TIME SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE. FOR CINEMA INQUIRIES, CALL: 722 4496.

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JULY 8,2006 GLADYS GUEVARA 9:00PM

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AT THE CINEMAS
THX
Reserve your tickets by texting SURESEATS GB3 or SURESEATS G4 to 2333 (Globe) or 211 (Smart) or log on to www.sureseats.com for web reservations
Movie schedules may change without prior notice. For verification, please call 729 7777

G1 GLORIETTA 1
1 THE NUN
2 SCARY MOVIE 4
3 THE LAKE HOUSE
4 PACQUIAO

G4 GLORIETTA 4
1 GARFIELD 2
2 THE LAKE HOUSE
3 THX THE FAST & THE FURIOUS: TOKYO DRIFT 1:30, 3:45, 6:00, 8:15, 10:30 GUARANTEED SEATS
4 KINSEY
5 CARS
6 SCARY MOVIE 4
7 THE SECRET OF THE CODE

GB1 GREENBELT 1
1 THE LAKE HOUSE
2 SCARY MOVIE 4

GB3 GREENBELT 3
1 THX THE LAKE HOUSE 1:20, 2:20, 4:20, 6:20, 8:20, 11:20 GUARANTEED SEATS
2 THX SCARY MOVIE 4 1:20, 2:20, 4:20, 6:20, 8:20, 11:20 GUARANTEED SEATS
3 KINSEY 1:30, 4:00, 6:30, 9:00, 11:30 GUARANTEED SEATS
4 GARFIELD 2 - 1:30, 3:15, 5:00, 6:45 INSIDE MAN - 8:25, 10:45 GUARANTEED SEATS
5 CARS 1:25, 3:45, 6:05, 8:25, 10:45 GUARANTEED SEATS

ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER
1 THX SCARY MOVIE 4
2 CARS
3 THE LAKE HOUSE
4 THE NUN
5 PACQUIAO

ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU
1 SCARY MOVIE 4
2 PACQUIAO
3 HILLS HAVE EYES
4 THE FAST & THE FURIOUS: TOKYO DRIFT

M2 MARKET! MARKET!
1 SCARY MOVIE 4
2 THE NUN
3 KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
4 PACQUIAO
5 THE LAKE HOUSE

At the Activity Center
Customer Service text hotline: 0917 6095900
Customer Service Numbers: Glorietta - 752 7272; from 10am to 8pm
Greenbelt - 752 4853; from 11am to 12mn
Alabang Town Center - 842 2782; from 10am to 8pm
Ayala Center Cebu - (032) 231 5342 loc 324
Market! Market! - 886 7519

GLORIETTA
Mitsubishi Motors Car Exhibit
June 22 to 26, 2006

ALABANG TOWN CENTER
JAB Boxing Exhibit
June 23 to 25, 2006

AYALA CENTER CEBU
Nokia Interactive Program
June 24 & 25, 2006

MARKET! MARKET!
Sony Summer Pleasures 2006
June 19 to July 12, 2006

GREENBELT
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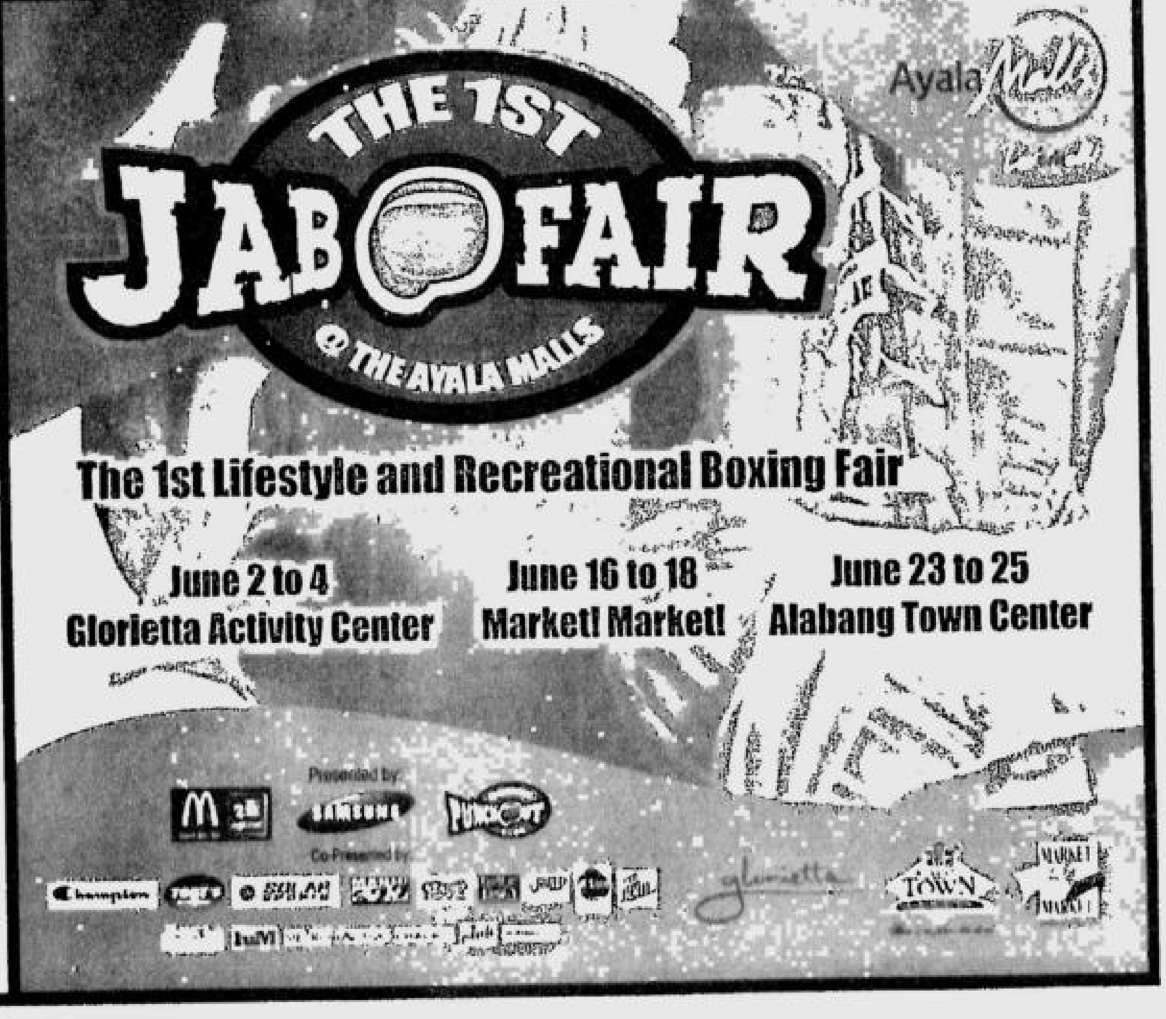
OPENS JUNE 28 AT ALL Ayala Malls CINEMAS
MTRCB Rating: General Audience (All Ages Admitted)



THE 1ST JAB FAIR @ THE AYALA MALLS
Ayala Malls
The 1st Lifestyle and Recreational Boxing Fair
June 2 to 4
Glorietta Activity Center
June 16 to 18
Market! Market!
June 23 to 25
Alabang Town Center
Presented by:
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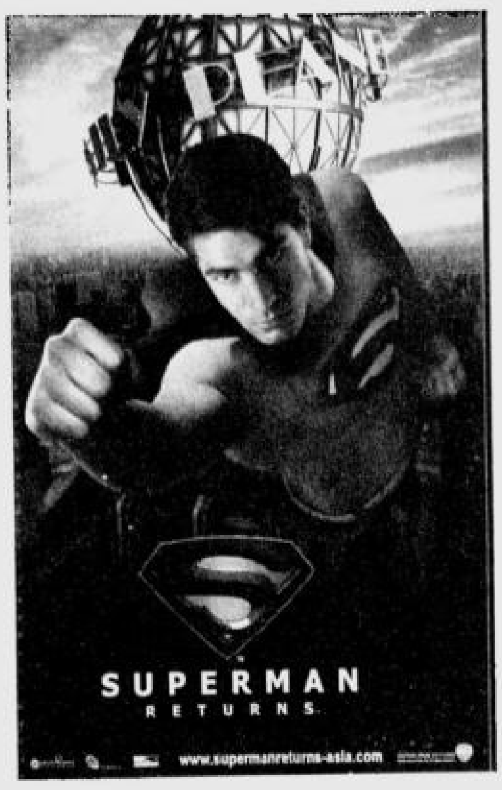
Co-Presented by:
Champion



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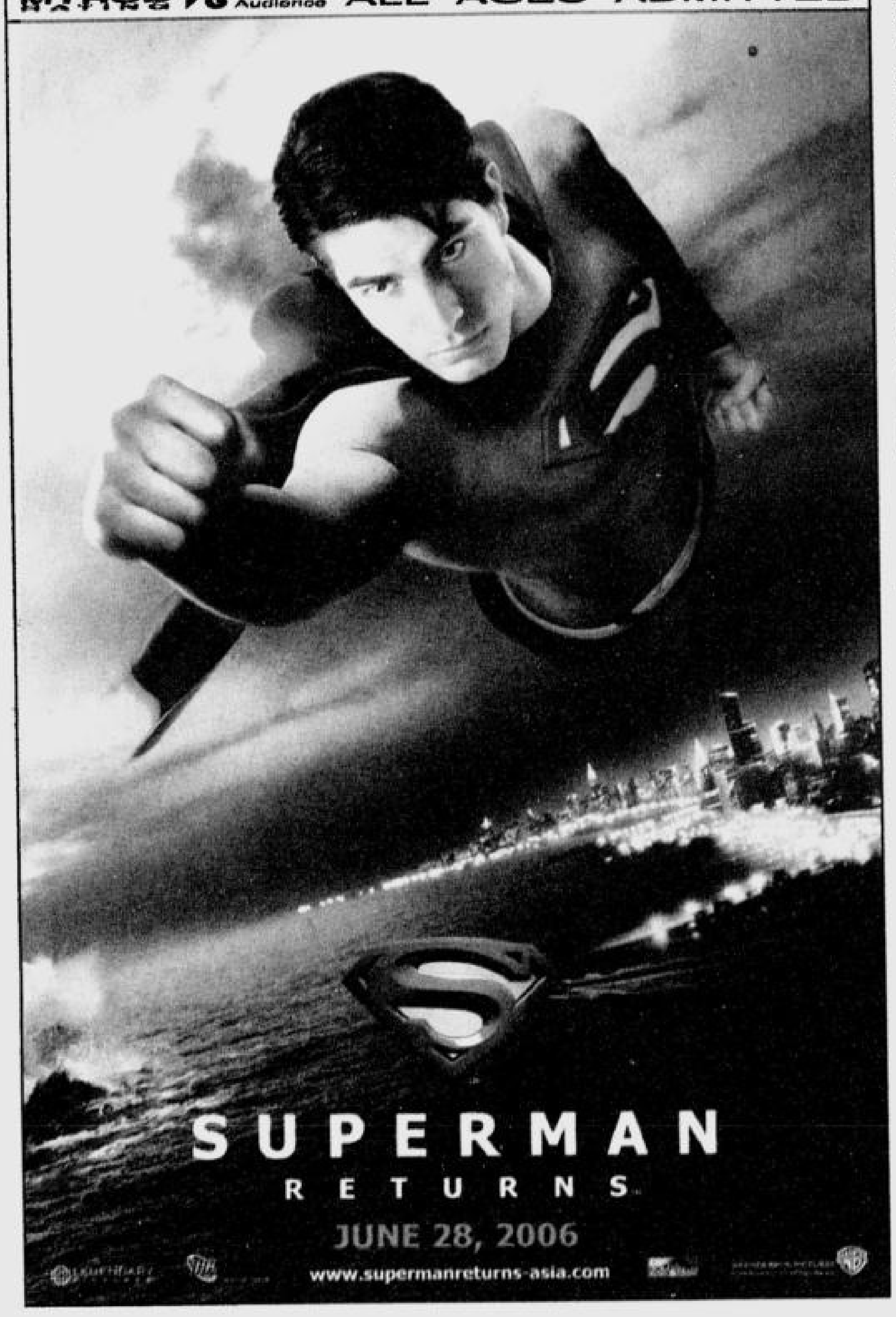


Enter Hayca Bunevacz

By Nini Valera

THE DAUGHTER OF TALENT manager Jessica Rodriguez confessed that she once had a crush on decathlon athlete David Bunevacz.

He became her stepfather a few years later.

"I was maybe about 12 then," recalled Hayca, who now bears David's last name, since he legally adopted her after wedding Jessica in 2003.

"I was so thrilled every time he came to visit my Mom," Hayca recalled. "I was so happy when they started dating. When they got married, I was one of the happiest persons on earth."

David also adopted Hayca's brother Grant, 12, Jessica's son with a previous partner. David and Jessica have a daughter, Breanna, 3.

Hayca described David as an "ideal" father.

"He's very supportive of everything I do," she said. "He's one person I can always talk to. I could not ask for a better father."

Last Father's Day, the whole family, minus Hayca, flew to Hong Kong to celebrate.

"I couldn't go because I had school the next day," Hayca explained. "*Sayang.*"

Hayca, 18, is a freshman at the University of Asia and the Pacific, taking up Business Marketing and Management.

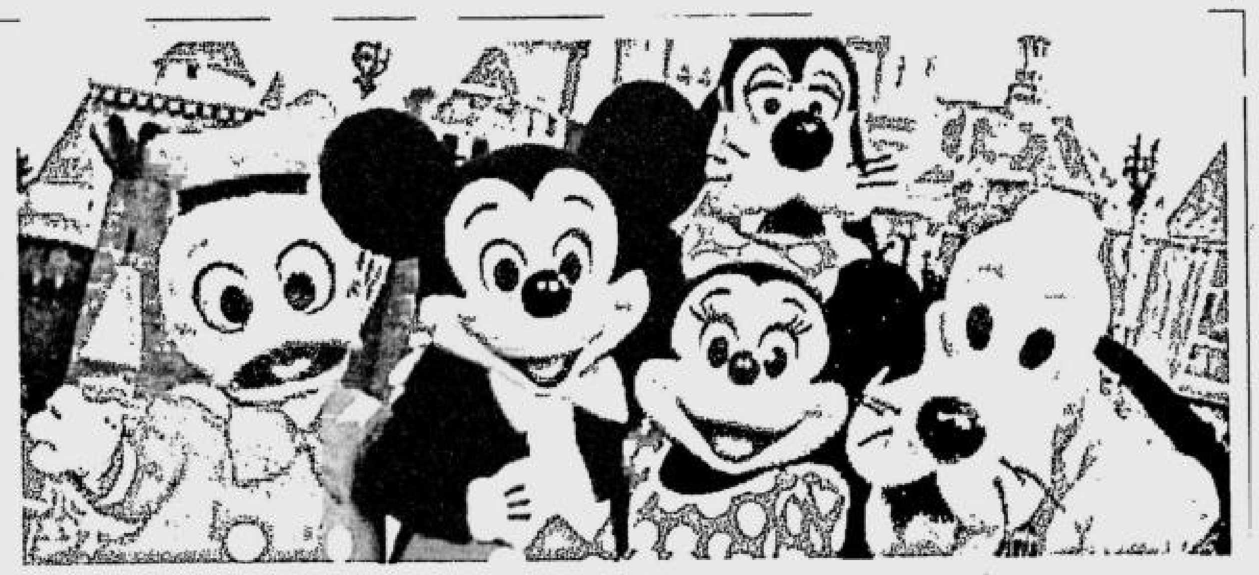
But she also wants to pursue her show biz dream.

"I've always wanted to be in show biz," she told INQUIRER Entertainment during the press launch of the teen-oriented show "Posh," which premiered Saturday on QTV 11. "I'd like to try it while I'm still young. If it doesn't work for me, then I'd move on to something else.

Of her role in the show, Hayca said, "It's something I really want." She plays a *sosyal* teen dealing with emotional upheavals.

Gigi Santiago, assistant vice president for Alternative Productions, Entertainment TV Group of GMA 7, which runs QTV, described "Posh" as a talent development show.

"It's a venue for the young talents we have discovered in our search shows like 'Starstruck,'" Santiago said. "The show will be like a training ground for future stars."



Soon, Disney in Shanghai

SHANGHAI—WALT DISNEY CO. MAY soon get the green light from China's central government to build a theme park in Shanghai.

The China Daily reports the Shanghai mayor's eagerness to host Disney, after the $1.8 billion Disneyland Hong Kong opened in 2005. China's capital city Beijing also wants one.

CHEER FACTOR

Disney has been in discussions with Shanghai officials for a long time, group chair George Mitchell told the China Daily, and talks are now under way between the Shanghai municipal government and the State Council, which has the final say.

"We try to proceed as quickly as possible after the execution of the contract, but until we execute a contract we don't get into when we are going to start," the paper cited Mitchell as saying.

Disney and Shanghai are believed to want to open the park in time for Shanghai's World Expo in 2010. City government preparations for the Expo rival in scale and enthusiasm Beijing's preparations for the 2008 Olympics.

Shanghai's park could be located in the Chuansha area, the China Daily said—midway between the city's international airport and the financial district in Pudong.

Disney had been coy about its mainland plans in the run-up to its opening in Hong Kong in September. But Mitchell said there was a market for both attractions, and that a new park in Shanghai would not undermine the Hong Kong site, the China Daily said. *Reuters*

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

TV GUIDE
Monday, June 26, 2006

THEY WILL BE THE JUDGES. YOU WILL BE THE JURY.
Philippine Idol
ABANGAN SA JULY 29!
ABC
Iba Tayo!

ClickTheCity.com

Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABC 5				National Geographic	V League				Sentro	How Clean Is Your House	ABC Action Movies				Big News	Fear Factor		Toloo TV	
ABS-CBN 2	Kapamilya Cinema			Pasion de Amor	Little Amy	Mr Bean	Naruto	Calla Lily	TV Patrol World		Kapamilya Deal Or No Deal	Bituing Walang Ningning	Sa Piling Mo	My Girl	A Love To Kill	OK Fine Whatever			Insider
AXN		Invincible				Ultimate Guinness World Records	E Buzz	Amazon		Andromeda (Season V)		Sports Disaster		Numb3rs (Season 2)		Lost (Season II)		House	
Cartoon Network	Police Academy	Richie Rich	Tom & Jerry Show	Baby Looney Tunes	Hi Hi Puffy AmiYumi	The Grim Adventures Of Billy & Mandy Double Episodes		The Simpsons - Double Episodes		Power Rangers Ninja Storm	PokeMon	Dice	Gundam Seed Destiny	The Simpsons		Mucha Lucha!	Duck Dodgers	Justice League	Samurai Jack
Cinema One		Intramuros Walls Of Hell				Ipagpatawad Mo				Pagdating Ng Panahon				Tanging Yaman				Sa Paraiso Ni Efren	
Cinemax		How To Save A Marriage And Ruin Your Life			Shirley Valentine (4:35 PM)				Blind Date (6:25 PM)			Philadelphia				Love Walked In			7 Seconds
CNN		Business International		World News	World Sport	Larry King Live		Business International	World Sport	World News Asia		World News	World Sport	World News Asia	Art Of Life	Your World Today			
Crime/Suspense		What Should You Do?		Law & Order Special Victims Unit		Profiler		Forensic Files	Mastermind	Law & Order		Law & Order Special Victims Unit		Crossing Jordan		Bones		Cold Case	
Discovery Channel				Monster Garage		The Greatest Ever		I Shouldn't Be Alive		Wild Discovery		Colour Of War VI Adolf Hitler		Flu Time Bomb		I Shouldn't Be Alive		On The Run	
Disney Channel	Mr. Bean, The Animated Series	Totally Spies	Art Attack/Un-[illegible] Bunny	Mickey Mouseworks	Lilo & Stitch	Martin Mystery	Totally Spies	Kim Possible	Mr. Bean, The Animated Series	That's So Raven	Wonderful World Of Disney			Black Hole High	Suite Life Of Zack And Cody	Kim Possible	Totally Spies	Wonderful World Of Disney	
ESPN		Pool Snooker [illegible] Masters '03 Round		[illegible] '05 [illegible] Semis		Asian X Games '05 Presented by Kia		Watersports [illegible]		Atlantic Coast Conf. Basketball [illegible] vs W Forest	Sportscenter Germany	Germany Tonight		Sportscenter Germany	LPGA Golf Wegmans Rochester 4th rd	Sportscenter Asia			Sportscenter Asia
ETC	Friends 10	Beach Girls		Change of Heart	Elimidate	Blind Date	Fifth Wheel	Seinfeld	Ambush Makeover	The Tyra Banks Show		Project Runway		Queer Eye For The Straight Guy		America's Next Top Model 4		ET Weekend	
ETC 2nd Avenue		Starting Over		The Maury Povich Show		The Jerry Springer Show		Dr Phil		NBC Nightly News	The Inside Edition	The Ellen Show		Wheel Of Fortune	Jeopardy	The Biggest Loser		NBC Nightly News	The Inside Edition
EWTN	Benediction And Devotion	Chaplet Of Mercy/ Angelus	Bible Treasure Chest	Image Of God	Rosary With Mother Angelica	EWTN Gallery	G.K. Chesterton: The Apostle Of Common Sense II	Threshold Of Hope		Sunday Night Live (Encore) Fr. Benedict Groeschel		Daily Mass Live		Holy Land Rosary/ Angelus	Good Or Evil, Who Decides?	The Gospel Of John	Freedom & Authority	Catholic Compass	
Fox News		Beltway Boys	Fox News Watch	Bulls & Bears	Cavuto On Business	Forbes On Fox	Cashin' In	Fox & Friends						Fox News Live					
GMA 7	Agawin Mo Man Ang Lahat (2:45 PM)	Now and Forever (3:15 PM)	Endless Love 1 Autumn In My Heart By Popular Demand		Sayuki	Dragonball Z	Gokusen	24 Oras		Captain Barbell	Majika	I Luv NY		Love Of The Condor Heroes		Lagot Ka, Isusumbong Kita			Saksi
Hallmark Channel		Child Of Our Time (3:10 PM)		Gift of Love: The Daniel Huffman Story (4:15 PM)				Bewitched	The Nanny	Judging Amy		Doc Martin		Judging Amy		Ordinary Miracles			Judging Amy (11:45 PM)
HBO			The Brooke Ellison Story			Peter Pan				Superman III				Striptease			Now On Big Screen In June	Fahrenheit 9/11 (11:15 PM)	
Hero TV	Yu-Gi-Oh Duel Monsters	Yakitate! Japan	Mr Ajikko	D.I.C.E.	Super Gals	Gamburogar	Gosaurer	Raijin Oh	Beyblade G-Revolution	Yu-Gi-Oh GX	Naruto	Mirmo de Pon	Inuyasha	Yu-Gi-Oh Duel Monsters	Yakitate! Japan	Mr Ajikko	D.I.C.E.	Super Gals	Gosaurer
IBC 13		EZ Shop				Home Shopping Network	IBC Express Balita	[illegible]		Japan Video Topics/ Ams		ME TV		Travel Philippines	Japan Video Topics/ Ams	Global Family Series	IBC News Tonite	Home Shopping Network	
JackTV		The Late Show David Letterman		Bottomline		Afterburn		X-Men Evolution	Beat The Geeks	Mad TV		That 70s Show	Family Guy	The Late Show David Letterman		Jack In The Box			
Lifestyle Network	Get Color	30 Minute Meals	Wolfgang Puck	Sweet Dreams	Smart Solutions	Sensible Chic	Decorating Cents	[illegible]	Everyday Italian	Food 911	E! Extra: High Price Of Fame		NY Fashion Week	Martha		Radical Sabbatical	Genuine Article	Good Finds	Style Star
MTV Philippines		Wildboyz			MTV Hits (w/ SMS)					Get Spotted				TRL		Wildboyz			
MYX		Rock MYX	My MYX	Mellow MYX	Urban MYX	Take 5	MYXLOG	MYX First	Star MYX	OPM MYX	Pop MYX	MYX Daily Top Ten		Mobile MYX		Urban MYX	My MYX	MYX Backtrax	MYXLOG
National Geographic	Wildlife Diary	National Geographic Specials		Naked Science		The Living Edens		Top 5 - Tornado		WOW! [illegible]		About Asia		National Geographic Specials		Naked Science Earth's Core		The Living Edens [illegible] Burning Shore	
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SBN 21				New Life TV Shopping				Winner TV Shopping		Sony Music Video		Oras Ng Himala		Oras ng Kapatiranan		SBN Music Video			
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Sports Plus				FIFA World Cup '06 Match 50 Round 16						World Game		World Poker Tour 2				Golf Today	Inside the PGA	FIFA World Cup '06 Match 49 Round 16	
Star Movies		Species II			Lethal Seduction			Harold & Kumar Go To White Castle			A Killer Within (7:20 PM)			Wicker Park				My Favorite Martian (10:50 PM)	
Star World		The Bold & The Beautiful		General Hospital		Ed		The Simpsons	Murphy In The Middle	Star News Asia	Seinfeld	My Wife And Kids	Still Standing	Yes Dear	Frasier	Monk/Dance Fever		Seinfeld	My Wife And Kids
Studio 23	Bewitched	YuGi-Oh 3 & 4				Batman Beyond	Dragon Booster	Spells	Pinoy Big Brother	Wazzup Wazzup	High School Reunion 2		Charmed (8:20 PM)	Lost (9:10 PM)		News Central	Miss Match		Travel Time

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Charo Santos: I choose my battles

Kapamilya's channel head will not get dragged into the raging debate on franchising

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

CHARO SANTOS, ABS-CBN executive vice president and channel head, was discussing a favorite book, Bill Carter's "Desperate Networks," when talks turned to "originality" in television.

Santos said: "The genres are [still] the same: drama, sitcom, talk show, variety, talent search. How you tweak it [makes the difference]. In the end, [success lies] in the way your show's characters connect with the viewers. It's in the writing, in the storytelling."

Controversial

Inquirer Entertainment was reminded of a controversial statement from Wilma Galvante, GMA 7 senior vice president for entertainment, who insisted in a June 15 story that the Kapuso channel "doesn't need to buy [a foreign franchise and] to get other people's ideas."

The question begged to be asked: Can anyone still claim originality in the world of television.

Maloli K. Espinosa, vice president for Government, Corporate Affairs and PR, picked it up: "No one has a monopoly on originality."

Santos demurred: "Here come the intrigues ... I read that story and all I can say is, more power! Kudos to those who can come up with original ideas. There is room for everyone. It's best to focus our energies on improving the quality of our [existing] programs. *Kanya-kanya 'yan* (We each have our own styles). Let's think of the best strategies for our respective networks."

Pressed to comment on Galvante's opinions, Santos said, shrugging: "She's my *kumare* (friend). The next time I see her, I'll tease her about that."

She said she was not easily provoked.

"I've been through a lot. It's been a very painful journey these past two years," Santos said. "ABS-CBN went through a crisis, followed by the Ultra tragedy... At this point, I've realized that one has to choose one's battles. You cannot just quarrel with everyone. I still believe that rivalry can be healthy; it doesn't have to be destructive."

But what is her stand on franchising?

"I'm all for it. If there's a good concept from abroad that could be a hit among our viewers, I don't see anything wrong ... in tweaking it to suit our culture and the needs of our viewers."

She offered "Pinoy Big Brother" as example. "Abroad, 'Big Brother' is kinda soft-porn, but we've given it a different [personality]."

Since ABS-CBN couldn't possibly focus on sex, Santos said, "We centered on the housemates' personalities. You may nave noticed that the big winners of 'PBB' have all shown strength of character and courage. They stand for something."

And they're all women.

More resilient

"What can say? Women are more resilient, patient and nurturing," she said, laughing.

She volunteered that majority of Kapamilya loyalists is, in fact, composed of women. "We have a large segment of A-B-C females ... those with purchasing power. Mothers decide what to buy for the home."

She insisted that "Pinoy Dream Academy," the latest incarnation of "PBB," was not cooked up as a direct competitor of another foreign franchise, "Philippine Idol" on ABC 5.

"'PDA' is based on Endemol's 'Star Academy' and TV Azteca's 'La Academia.' We're getting the best ingredients from the two concepts, but we're improvising and whipping up our own version. We first looked into 'Academy' three to four years ago," she said.

The "Idol" franchise was initially offered to ABS-CBN, Santos confirmed.

"It was during the time of [former network president] Freddie Garcia, but we had some problems ... we couldn't make expensive calls then," she said, chuckling.

Kapamilya's game plan is to go global, she pointed out.

"When it comes to programming, we are addressing not only our viewers in the Philippines, but also Filipinos all over the world. And we're not limiting ourselves to TFC (The Filipino Channel) subscribers. Ten countries in Africa have bought our soaps. 'Pangako sa 'Yo' and 'Sana'y Wala Nang Wakas' are popular in Kenya. Jericho Rosales and Kristine Hermosa are big stars in Malaysia."

Balancing act

She also observed that Kapamilya viewers in "North America prefer drama to *fantaseryes*."

"I need to constantly strike a balance between local and foreign audiences. Our prime time programming is a balancing act," she said.

Speaking of which, she reiterated that the network's initiative to move "Bandila" (the late-night newscast) to 10:30 p.m. was an attempt to "respond to viewer feedback" and attain balance—that word again—in programming.

"I believe that one hour of news (when viewers are still awake) within 20 hours of programming is not enough. Now, we'll have Current Affairs shows three nights a week. Entertainment took only two nights: Monday (for "OK Fine ... Oh Yes") and Friday (for "Aalog-Alog"). This shouldn't be seen as a rivalry between News and Entertainment."

As overall channel manager, she said she was expected to see the big picture. "I value the same things as the News people: information and analysis of issues."

"KUDOS to those who can come up with all-original ideas," The ABS-CBN exec. ROMY HOMILLADA

"Ang gusto ko sa almusal, tanghalian, hapunan at midnight snack ay boses ni love."

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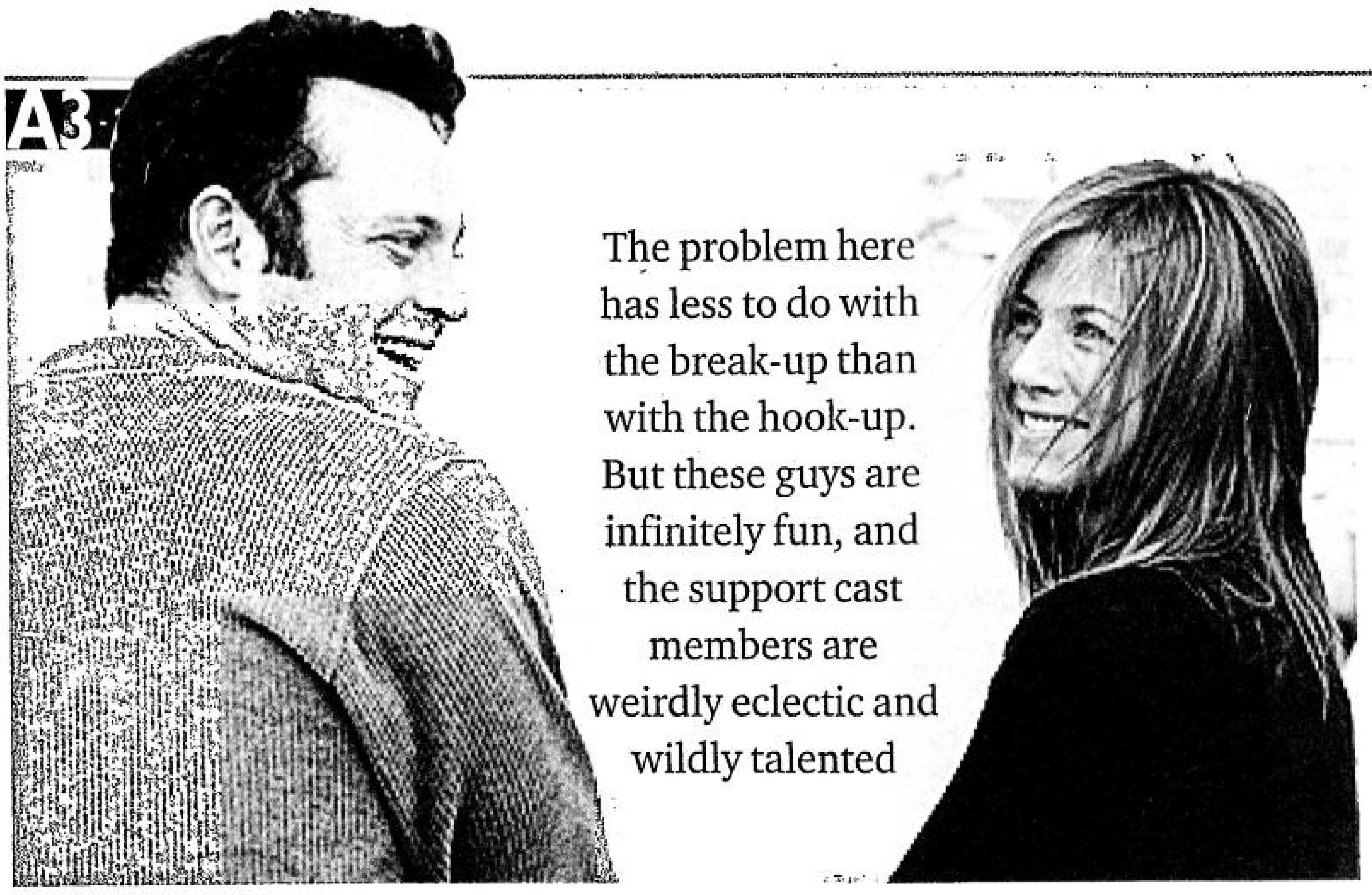

The problem here has less to do with the break-up than with the hook-up. But these guys are infinitely fun, and the support cast members are weirdly eclectic and wildly talented

A watered-down 'War of the Roses'

REVIEW

NEW YORK—THE PROBLEMS WITH "The Break-Up" have less to do with the break-up than with the initial hook-up.

Vince Vaughn and Jennifer Aniston — who've hooked up in real life, for those of you who haven't gone through a grocery-store checkout line lately — each have more than enough presence and comic timing to sustain the movie. But together their characters are so vastly different, it's hard to believe they'd be compatible long enough to sustain a two-year relationship and share a Chicago condo.

Infinitely fun

As Gary Grobowski, the fast-talking tour guide on a double-decker bus, he's an infinitely fun guy. The protracted riffs from Vaughn, who shares a story-by credit, are some of the film's strongest parts; once again, he's functioning as the figure we've come to know and love from "Swingers" and "Old School" and "Wedding Crashers" on cue. But he's also incorrigibly selfish with his nonstop "SportsCenter" and video games.

Meanwhile, Aniston's Brooke Meyers comes off as a shrill nag. A stylish and sophisticated art gallery manager, she's constantly trying to drag him to the ballet. And it's not that she wants him to do the dishes, but rather she wants him to want to do the dishes. (To which he responds, "Why would I want to do the dishes?" It's a legitimate question.)

So when they break up, which happens pretty early in this self-professed "anti-romantic comedy," it doesn't seem tragic. It just makes sense.

But where do you go for the next hour and a half?

From there, director Peyton Reed and first-time screenwriters Jeremy Garelick and Jay Lavender have pretty much remade "The War of the Roses," only they've watered it down. Once Brooke dumps Gary after a painfully awkward family dinner party, neither is willing to leave the apartment, and each tries to drive the other out.

But their game of one-upmanship, in which she throws his clothes into the hallway to the tune of Alanis Morissette's blaring "You Oughta Know" and he invites strippers over for poker, cigars and lap dances with his buddies, never sinks to the level of vitriolic meanness that Kathleen Turner and Michael Douglas achieved. You always have the sense that, at any moment, they could kiss and make up.

Peyton Reed, who also directed "Bring It On" and the obnoxiously over-the-top "Down With Love," shows comparative restraint here at a time when perhaps he should have just gone for it.

Thankfully there are some people in "The Break-Up" who do just that. They are the members of the weirdly eclectic, wildly talented supporting cast.

Dazzling

Vincent D'Onofrio breathes life into what could have been a forgettable, cardboard character as one of Gary's brothers, who share the Chicago tour-bus business. Then again, he's good in everything.

Judy Davis is dazzling as Marilyn Dean, the owner of the gallery where Brooke works: an arrogant, brittle, capricious diva with a thing for much younger men.

And of course there's longtime Vaughn pal Jon Favreau, once again playing his best friend, a South Side bar owner.

It is sort of awesome that Vaughn is willing to rip off his polyester shirt and storm out of the bowling alley when Brooke and the rest of his friends kick him off the couples team on league night. He's not exactly Brad Pitt in "Fight Club." And you've got to love that about him.

Christy Lemire, AP

Sharon in homecomi
concert in Pampang

SO MUCH HAS BEEN SAID AND WRITTEN about Megastar Sharon Cuneta. But one thing a lot of people don't know is that her mother's family is from a town called Sta. Ana, near Mt. Arayat in Pampanga.

Her husband, Sen. Francis "Kiko" Pangilinan is also Kapampangan. His family is from Santo Tomas, Pampanga.

Thus, "Megastar Sharon Cuneta Live in Pampanga" is sort of a homecoming for her.

Featuring Christian Bautista as special guest the show is set for July 29, Saturday, 8 p.m. at the Clark Expo in Clarkfield.

Call 911-5555, (045) 887-0998, (045) 599-6020, or (045) 599-3222.

Merk with Manhattan Transfer

On July 7, Richard Merk opens the Manhattan Transfer concert at the Araneta Coliseum. Richard, has been a member of popular live show bands since the 1980s— Sangkatutak, Royal Flush, Sticky Band, Star Band and Blackbird.

He currently runs Merk's Bar Bistro in Greenbelt 3, Ayala Center Makati, where he also performs every Wednesday. He recently starred in an Independence Day show in San Francisco.

For the Manhattan Transfer show, call 911-5555.

RICHARD Merk

Kundirana

La Salle Young Artists Foundation Inc. presents "Kundirana" at the CCP Main Theater, 8 p.m., Saturday, July 1. It is a celebration of the group's 35th anniversary, to coincide with the launch of the CD "Kundirana."

The anniversary gala concert features Kundirana Batch 2006 (back from a successful tour of California and Maryland: Batch 2007; representatives of Kundirana Batches 1971-2005 including Ogie Alcasid and Dingdong Eduque; and guests Pilita Corrales and one-time Bb. La Salle Jackie Lou Blanco.

SHOW TIME

Today

Jojo A All the Way
RJTV Bar

Strings of Soul and
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Silk and Steel at Mer
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Dance Diva at Bron

Tomorrow

Jojo A All
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Aretha and the Soul
at Merk's Bar

June 28

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Break at RJTV Bar

RJ at Discovery Suite
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The Dorques andSes
Tavern on the Square

Wednesday Jazz Festi
Bar with Richard M
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Café Makati

June 29

Jojo A All the Way a
Break at RJTV Bar

Sandilea and MYMP
the Square

Acoustic Jive at Merk

June 30

Roselle Nava with g
Laurente at Zirkoh, An
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RJ 'n Friends and Mo
RJTV Bar

Go Girls album laun
Dance Bar

Fat Session at Tav
Square

Cascades 2006 World

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SHARON Cuneta

KUNDIRANA

Solace at SM North Edsa

July 1

Cascades 2006 World Tour in Cagayan de Oro City

REUBEN Laurente

July 2

Erik Santos at SM Fairview

July 4

Reuben Laurente at Hyatt Regency's Calesa Bar

July 5

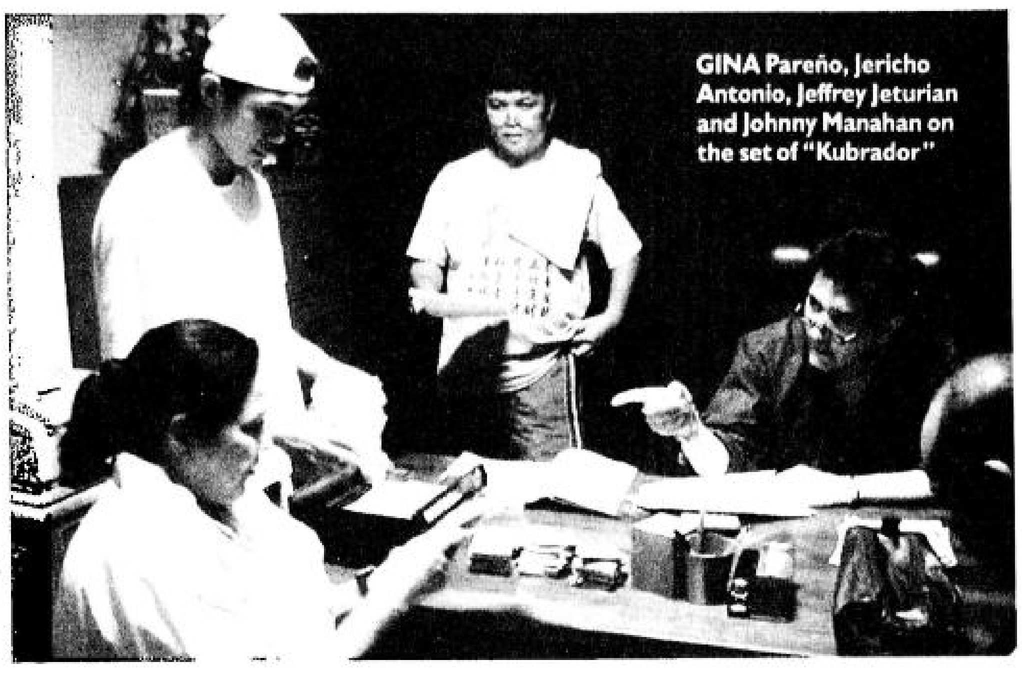
Reuben Laurente with **Leo Valdez**, **Bituin Escalante**, **JM Rodriguez** and **Calvin Millado** at the CCP Main Theater fror the Philippine Obstetrical Society's 60th Anniversary

July 7

Backroom Musical Caravan with **Erik Santos**, **Frenchie Dy**, **Kim Flores**, **K and the Boxers** and **Rufa Mae Quinto** in Marbel City

Gina as lady in 'jueteng'

By Jovenal D. Velasco
Contributor



GINA Pareño, Jericho Antonio, Jeffrey Jeturian and Johnny Manahan on the set of "Kubrador"

YOUNG FILMMAKER JEFFREY JETURIAN sinks his teeth into genres he has not tried before, employing an unconventional style and treatment for each one. And each time, he bites deep into the meat, which he subsequently serves extremely well done.

From start to finish, "Kubrador," Jeturian's latest, is a series of dramatic expositions. Even then, the script written by Ralston Jover (supervised by Armando Lao) makes sense and translates into an enticing film. The movie follows the daily operations of the illegal numbers game *jueteng*, as seen through a seemingly objective eye that merely records what it sees. It etches the portrait of a female bet collector amidst composite lives in a poor neighborhood.

Although seemingly plotless, "Kubrador" has intricately textured visuals and subtexts in dialogues that offer the viewer deep insights on several levels that may even appear contradictory. Thus the film mesmerizes, and does not merely provide dramatic action and tension which are, nevertheless, not entirely lack.

Take the case of Amy, portrayed by Gina Pareno with straightforward sincerity and sensitivity. She belies the traditional, albeit unfair, perception of of a typical *jueteng* collector as a sloth. This one is admirably hardworking. In fact, she is the family's breadwinner, and is similarly indefatigable in her undertakings for the community. She not only collects and places bets; she also solicits donations for wakes, burials, and other neighborhood emergencies.

REVIEW

Her husband, suffering from a physical disability, has apparently abdicated his role as head of the family, relegating himself to housekeeping chores, including minding their sari-sari store and solicitously attending to Amy's minor needs—during breaks on his favorite TV game show. This set-up illustrates a reversal of traditional gender roles suspiciously common among contemporary Filipino families.

Irreverent

Amy starts her day with a prayer that becomes irreverent as she implores protection from policemen as she conducts her illegal activities. She takes to task a pregnant daughter sneaking out some goodies from the store, only to turn warm and obliging as a grandson visits and claims his daily supply of free junk food. For someone who superstitiously sees and reads numbers in almost every ridiculous or bizarre situation and encounter, Amy appears the least interested in watching television that features *Pera o Bayong*, said to have brought instant fortune to not a few contestants. She is no less a bundle of contradictions as she conducts her daily routine, whether bailing out a fellow neophyte in the business, or taking a police officer's secret bet.

Amy stubbornly persists in collecting bets despite slim pickings from the game that physically runs her down. Surely, *jueteng* provides her some psychic reward, perhaps from constant interaction with members of the community who obviously accord her some respect and affection for being their conduit to luck ... or hope, no different from Chinese geomancers who hold court in plush Makati hotels.

At this time in the Filipino's life when prices of commodities and services continue to rise, faith and hope still abound, providing a magical contrast to harsh reality.

Though a pillar of strength, Amy shows fear and weakness as she realizes she may not escape life's dark labyrinths. But she has a mighty protector in a son she earlier lost. He appears occasionally, watching over her, soothing her at the end of a hard working day, guiding her way, and shielding her from danger.

Two styles

Appropriately, Jeturian fuses two approaches in dialectic interaction—the stark reality of social realism, rendered in self-reflexive documentary style (long takes of handheld shots, cinematography and production design that simulate rawness and crudeness, spontaneous interaction among actors devoid of artifice and self-consciousness); and the mystical atmosphere of magic realism (highlighting the minimalist musical score), as images unfold, of unrelenting hope that things will soon turn out for the better, and unconditional faith in the supernatural.

The ghost of the son is a brilliant imagery for all-encompassing faith: Someone watches over and protects small lives. That is how the wretched of this earth cope. This, to them, is the reality, no matter what the more privileged among us may think or say.

(Jovenal D. Velasco is a faculty member of the UP Film Institute, teaching Film Studies and Production courses. He is also a member of the Philippine Educational Theater Association.)

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Kidlat on digital film boom

EV ESPIRITU, PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

KIDLAT Tahimik and son Kidlat de Guia horse around with their cameras.

Vincent Cabreza
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—IN 1977, INDEPENDENT filmmaker Kidlat Tahimik took a 16-millimeter reel camera to a community in Ifugao to encourage villagers to document their culture on their own terms.

Referring to this innate indigenous cultural and creative spirit as one's "little *duwende* [dwarf]," Kidlat said that, at the time, he had wanted to promote the philosophy by sharing his equipment with the residents of Hapao village in Hungduan, Ifugao, where one of the more pristine rice terraces in the province still stands.

Kidlat has won global accolades for writing, acting, directing and producing films outside the country's studio system, based on a philosophy that Hollywood-inspired standards have no place in the indigenous art and identity of Filipinos.

But the advent of digital technology made Kidlat's life concept a reality for more Filipinos outside Hapao.

Fulfilled goal

Kidlat said this technology fulfilled his original goal because it placed the craft in the hands of the ordinary Pinoy. Compared to 16-mm film and the conventional 35-mm film projected by mainstream cinemas, he said, digital technology was far cheaper.

According to Kidlat, it may be the liberation for artists in the film industry, which is facing a huge slide in revenues because of the escalating cost of imported film stock.

Kidlat said improvements in the digital medium had been so swift, it had become "so easy, so light ... it is portable, and [can record good images] even in available light conditions."

Only experts in the medium may detect differences between movies shot on film or by digital cameras, he said.

"[The difference is the degree] in clarity. The technology of video and television is [of such a format] that the moment you project [digital film on television], *lumalabo* (it loses resolution)," Kidlat said.

"But if they're improving the process of shooting with a smaller camera, and if they're also improving the scanning of digital on celluloid, then minimal *lang yung* loss to the resolution," he said.

Genuine evolution

He added that the genuine evolution that digital technology had drawn out of Philippine cinema was the avenue that allows non-formulaic stories to be told.

Kidlat used to teach film appreciation at the University of the Philippines Baguio, where he fine-tuned his advocacy for indigenous Filipino creativity.

He has relocated to Hapao, he said, partly to thrive in a culture he embraces, and partly to monitor his film experiment.

Most of these details were archived in footage taken by his eldest son, documentary filmmaker Kidlat de Guia.

The camera Kidlat donated to Hapao is showing some wear and tear, but he said it had produced images of the culture shot by the villagers at their own pace.

The footage was shot using the villagers own perspective of what is important and should be kept and seen by future generations.

H'wood pins hope on 'Superman' & 'Pirates'

LOS ANGELES—ONE SAVES THE world and the other robs it, but what Superman and pirate Captain Jack Sparrow share this summer is Hollywood's hope they will rescue it from the brink of a two-year losing streak at US box offices.

Hollywood's summer season, which makes up as much as 40 percent of the roughly $9 billion annual domestic box office, hits its mid-point this week with the June 28 release of Warner Bros. "Superman Returns." Disney's "Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest" hits movie screens on July 7.

Each is an effects-filled adventure costing over $200 million, and each is the kind of movie that could rake in hundreds of millions of dollars at box offices.

But to do so, each needs a long run in theaters and that means delighting fans with a good story—again, something Hollywood has not done well in recent summers.

"If we want the [box office] numbers to come out better than last year's performance, we need to be kicked into high gear," said Paul Dergarabedian, president of box office tracker Exhibitor Relations Co Inc. "It's a close race, and there is more pressure than ever for these movies to perform."

Creative slump

To date, summer ticket revenues are $1.37 billion, up a scant one percent from last year but down eight percent from 2004.

Hollywood has not had two straight down summers in revenues since 1995 and 1996, according to Exhibitor Relations, official box office trackers.

Opening ahead of "Superman" and "Pirates," was Sony Pictures' comedy "Click," with Adam Sandler, which hit theaters on Friday. It typifies what is fast becoming a two-year creative slump in big-budget summer films tied to a lack of original ideas and too many sequels.

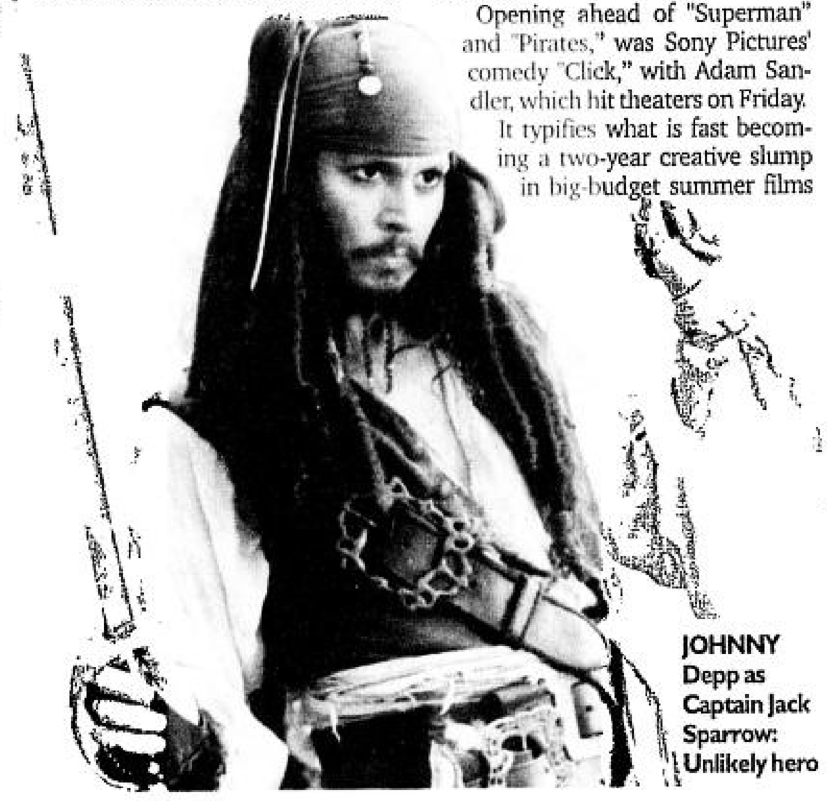
"Click" tells of a father who glimpses his future only to see he neglected his family. Even Sandler admits his movie has similarities to other movies like the classic "It's a Wonderful Life."

At rottentomatoes.com, which aggregates reviews, "Click" earned only 14 "fresh" scores out of a total 54, as of Friday.

Other star-driven movies like Sony's "The DaVinci Code," Twentieth Century Fox's "X-Men: The Last Stand," Universal's "The Break-Up" and Paramount's "Nacho Libre," earned mixed comments, at best, from critics, despite solid ticket sales.

Studio executives have long argued that young men, who make up the core audience for big-budget and star-driven summer movies, pay more attention to studio marketing than to reviews.

But the question is whether two years of many bad summer movies is causing audiences to turn toward other entertainment.



JOHNNY Depp as Captain Jack Sparrow: Unlikely hero

Thumbs up

Fortunately for Hollywood, early reviews give "Superman Returns" a thumbs up. Time Magazine's Richard Corliss calls it "beyond super. It's superb." He credits "a beguiling subtext" injected into a "crowd-pleasing story."

At $200 million-plus, it represents a big risk to Warner Bros., but the studio is trying to revive a franchise that died nearly 20 years ago. "It deserves a budget and it deserves the scope we are bringing to it," said director Bryan Singer.

Reviews are not yet available for "Pirates," but other movies are getting good reactions in early screenings including comedies "The Devil Wears Prada" and "You, Me and Dupree." *Bob Tourtellotte, Reuters*

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Some 50 kilos of gold await Ruffa in case...

'Ylmaz is dying to have a boy, but I don't want to get pregnant again this year. This is the first time I've been my old self in three years'

By Nini Valera

IN CASE THEIR CROSS-cultural marriage crumbles, Ruffa Gutierrez will receive 50 kilos of gold from the family of her husband Ylmaz Bektas.

This was what the actress and former beauty queen disclosed to INQUIRER Entertainment during a recent one-on-one interview.

"We didn't have a pre-nup," Ruffa said. "But the Turkish are very clannish. They're like Filipinos. That's what we agreed on—for me to get 50 kilos of gold, should we separate."

But so far, according to Ruffa, their marriage is going strong.

"There were problems in the beginning," Ruffa admitted. "We were too passionate, trying to control each other long distance. I'd be in London and he in LA, and he would call me to tell me not to go out. But that stage is now over."

Even Ruffa's mother, the feisty Annabelle Rama, had doubts the marriage would last.

"She started thinking the way other people thought," Ruffa said. But we have come this far, and I'm very happy."

Busy in Istanbul

Ruffa has kept herself busy in Istanbul, with her newfound career as editor of Fashion TV, a magazine she herself publishes. She edits the magazine with foreign editors, a job that she has grown to love.

She has also learned the Turkish language can now communicate with her in-laws in their native tongue. During a recent visit of the Gutierrez clan to Istanbul, Ruffa served as interpreter.

"That was the first time we were all together," Ruffa said. "I was so happy to have them there."

Ruffa and Ylmaz have two baby girls, Lorin, 3, and Venice, 2, who were born a year apart.

"Ylmaz is dying to have a boy," Ruffa said. "But I don't want to get pregnant again this year. This is the first time I've been my old self in three years."

Extremely jealous

Ruffa described Ylmaz as "extremely jealous," and herself as "extremely vain."

"There are beauty spas in Istanbul," she said. "But I come here for my beauty treatments."

She turned up at the clinic of her cosmetic surgeon, Dr. Manny Calayan, two days after arriving in Manila, for the latest laser treatments (on stretch marks and fat from her pregnancies).

Annabelle also underwent a laser procedure for facial wrinkles. Mother and daughter are currently featured on billboards as models for the clinic. This has become a bone of contention between the two: Who is the bigger star?

"My mother's face is bigger than mine on the billboards. I may have to be based here again to get equal exposure," Ruffa jested.

She admitted that she missed being in the limelight.

"How could I not?" she said. "I have been in show biz since I was 14. That's why I come home to do shows."

Yesterday, Ruffa celebrated her birthday with friends and family. She refused to divulge her age, saying she stopped counting after 21.

Michael Moore film festival of 60 films

TRAVERSE CITY, MICHIGAN—Michael Moore's second film festival will be headlined by a mock-documentary produced by Jeff Goldblum and the latest comedy from Woody Allen.

The Oscar-winning filmmaker is the founder of the Traverse City Film Festival, which drew 50,000 admissions last summer in the northern Michigan resort town.

This summer, the July 31-Aug. 6 festival includes the Midwest premiere of those movies, the showing of more than 60 films, panels with the actors and filmmakers and an outdoor 65-foot (19.5-meter) screen featuring older flicks.

Goldblum's film "Pittsburgh," will kick off the festival on July 31 at the State Theatre.

The deadpan comedy stars Goldblum playing himself as an actor who puts his Hollywood career on hold to act alongside his new girlfriend in a Pittsburgh regional theater production of "The Music Man." Illeana Douglas, Ed Begley Jr. and musicians Moby and Alanis Morissette also are in the movie.

The festival ends with two screenings of "Scoop," the Allen comedy that stars Scarlett Johannsen as a college journalist in London who stumbles upon a big story. It co-stars Hugh Jackman, Ian McShane and Allen himself.

"We are very proud to be the first to show these two wonderful films in our part of the country," Moore said in a statement Thursday. The lineup also was announced at a news conference Friday.

"It's rare that smart, adult comedies such as these are made these days and we want to encourage more of that kind of filmmaking," Moore said.

Filmmakers Larry Charles and David O. Russell and actors Malcolm McDowell and Matthew Modine are expected to attend.

Also planned is a tribute to Stanley Kubrick on the 50th

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1 LAKE HOUSE • THX
1:10 3:20 5:30 7:40 9:50

2 SCARY MOVIE 4
11:20 1:25 3:30 5:35 7:40 9:50

3 AN AMERICAN HAUNTING
1:20 3:30 5:40 7:50 10:00

4 THE FAST AND THE FURIOUS 3
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

5 VICTORY

6 THE NUN
11:35 1:40 3:45 5:50 7:55 10:00

7 KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00

8 WHORE
2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 10:00

9 PACQUIAO THE MOVIE
12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00

10 CARS 12:00 2:30
GARFIELD 2 5:35 7:40 9:45

ERMITA
538-7809 to 12

1 SCARY MOVIE 4 10:20 12:20 2:20 4:20 6:20 8:25 10:00

2 AN AMERICAN HAUNTING
12:00 1:40 3:20 5:00 6:40 8:20 10:00

3 GARFIELD 2 12:00 1:55 3:50
WHORE 6:00 8:00 9:50

4 THE FAST AND THE FURIOUS 3
10:10 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

5 PACQUIAO THE MOVIE
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

6 THE NUN
10:10 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

7 KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO 11:00 3:20
LAKE HOUSE 5:45 7:45 9:50

METRO EAST
682-8193 • 682-8199

1 KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
1:05 3:45 6:25 9:05

2 SCARY MOVIE 4
11:20 1:45 4:15 6:45 9:15

3 THE FAST AND THE FURIOUS 3
12:05 2:15 4:25 6:35 9:00

4 CARS 12:00 2:25 4:50
GARFIELD 2 7:15 9:00

5 AN AMERICAN HAUNTING
11:50 2:10 4:30 6:50 9:10

6 LAKE HOUSE
12:50 2:50 4:50 6:50 9:00

7 GARFIELD 2
12:30 2:40 4:50 7:00 9:10

8 THE NUN
12:30 2:40 4:50 7:00 9:10

NOVALICHES
935-3231 / 935-3229-30

1 THE FAT AND THE FURIOUS 3
2 PACQUIAO THE MOVIE
3 SCARY MOVIE 4
4 LAKE HOUSE
5 KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
6 THE NUN

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2 KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
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CARS
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LAKE HOUSE

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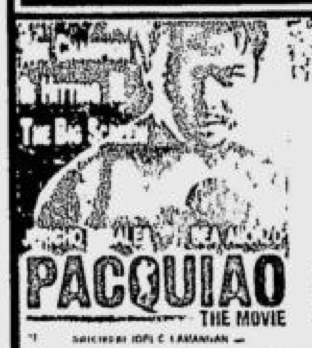

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FEEDBACK

Hola, Piolo!

FROM JOSE Manuel Balaguer (mr_palomitas@yahoo.com) Rambla Diagonal Barcelona, Spain:

Hola! We just want to express the big disappointment of the Filipino community here in Barcelona regarding Piolo Pascual's last concert here. I was one of the sponsors of that event. My only purpose was to entertain our compatriots.

Piolo Pascual and company (Rica Peralejo, Pokwang, etc.) arrived here in Barcelona to promote ABS-CBN's The Filipino Channel and to do one show.

We were all very excited. It was only the second time this year that a Pinoy artist had visited us; the first one was Ogie Alcasid and company.

But Piolo's group did not treat us well. I wonder if that was their network's instruction—to avoid close contact and not even sign autographs or pose for snapshots.

Well, they should know that if this is their attitude, we'd rather not support them here in Spain.

Or, in case we have another celebration like the past Independence Day, we'd rather not invite them anymore.

What happened was a big lesson for us Pinoys here in Barcelona.

Well, maybe they're good actors, not goof people. Sorry, ABS-CBN, we can't help you anymore.

Muchas gracias.

Congrats!

FROM JOSEPHINE Anduiza (jinkyanduiza@yahoo.com), 66 Wintrhop Road, Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk, UK:

I would like to congratulate ABS-CBN for coming out with a program that features the sacrifices and hardships of us Filipinos working abroad. I have bitter-sweet experiences, but at the end of the day it is for the good of my family that I have chosen to work abroad.

Michael Moore film …

From page A4-1

anniversary of his first film. It will include screenings of all 11 of his movies, such as "A Clockwork Orange," "Lolita" and "2001: A Space Odyssey."

Moore founded the film festival with local author Doug Stanton and photographer John Robert Williams, saying they wanted to encourage top-quality films and give movie buffs an alternative to standard cineplex offerings. *AP*

When pandering to the youth mystique is a mistake

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

TIME WAS WHEN, TO BECOME a TV host, you had to be personable, intelligent, articulate, experienced, knowledgeable, charismatic and empathetic. Today, all you have to be is well-connected, dishy-looking and *young*.

What's going on here? Our TV networks are pandering big time to the nation's youth culture and market, because they are belatedly and thus over-eagerly heeding what demographers have been telling them for years: That the majority of Filipinos are young, so programs and TV personalities should be suited to the youth's preferences, needs and expectations.

There's some sense in that, but the trouble is, TV stations have reacted excessively in favor of the youth mystique, hence the current idolatry on the small tube toward anyone and anything youthful.

Thus, we witness the sad spectacle of raw teens who are given hosting duties that they fail to properly comply with.

Banking mostly on their youth, good looks, trendy clothes and hip spiels written on appropriately named "idiot boards" by other people, the tyro hosts look nervous and even terrified, speak in an anguished whisper or a croak, and read their spiels as though they were intoning their own death sentence.

They fail to understand that hosting is much more than being young, looking good and reading perky spiels.

Good TV hosts are supposed to draw the best out of their guests, to ask the key questions in viewers' minds, to give a show character, scope and insight, and to make the program's elements interesting and exciting for the viewing public.

TV hosts are supposed to forget about themselves, and to think only of their guests, viewers, and the major impact or insight that their show is supposed to project.

However, if you're callow, shallow and nervous as heck, how could you possibly have the sense and sensibility to focus on those truly important objectives?

No, you just try to survive as best you can, without ending up with too much egg on your face.

These thoughts come to mind because we've recently had our fill of untalented young program "hosts" who have been bombing miserably on the tube, thus grievously compromising the effectivity of the shows assigned to them:

A teen starlet interviews a senior star about his decades-long career, and insults his guest with his abysmal ignorance.

Young "singing champions" host talent shows by simply reading spiels that all too predictably go, "Excited *na ako sa show natin ngayong gabi*—excited *ka na ba?*" "Excited *rin ako,* exciting *talaga ang* show *natin ngayon!*"

—Oh, please.

Trouble is, viewers don't complain that they are being poorly served by these callow non-hosts, and by the studio executives who cavalierly transform them into "hosts" overnight. So, assert your right to intelligent and professional programming, and speak up!

As for the young "hosts" themselves, please realize that many of you are doing shoddy, shallow work, so prepare yourselves much more thoroughly before you dare to face the TV cameras again.

The face you save may be your own.

> Hosting is more than being young

Kids' Choice Awards

Nicksters, enjoy the "circuscentric" celebration at the much-awaited Nickelodeon Kids' Choice Awards Preview Party, July 2 at the Aliw Theater. Nominees for top awards are Sam Milby, Sam Concepcion, Iza Calzado, Bianca Gonzalez and Manny Pacquiao).

'Predator Week'

On the National Geographic Channel from July 2 to 8 at 9 p.m., "Predator Week" brings to light the distinctive balance of survival between predator and prey in the harsh African wilderness. From the grasslands of the Serengeti to the Okauango Delta in Botswana, viewers are taken on a stunning visual journey into African wildlife and its endless battle for survival.

ROUNDUP

'Sapulso!' premiere

QTV AIRS "SAPULSO!" A NEW NOONTIME INFOTAINMENT show that mixes hard core news, lifestyle and entertainment, starting today at 12:30 p.m.

Hosting the various segments are Ivan Mayrina, Valerie Tan, Tonypet Gaba and the comic tandem of Betong at Mae.

"Kwento-Serye" jumpstarts the show's campaign on Mondays, featuring a story that runs for six days.

Chinese blockbuster

MOSCOW—THE MOSCOW INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL opened Friday with Chen Kaige's 2005 mega budget fantasy epic "The Promise." Chen's "Farewell My Concubine" was the first mainland Chinese film to win the Cannes Festival's top Palme d'Or prize in 1993.

Seventeen movies are competing this year for Best Film, Director, Actor and Actress.

Among the contenders are "How Much Do You Love Me?" by French director Bertrand Blier, starring Monica Bellucci and Gerard Depardieu; "Relatives" by Hungary's Istvan Szabo; Chilean Raoul Ruiz's "Klimt" starring John Malkovich; U.S. director Robert Towne's "Ask the Dust" and "Driving Lessons" by Britain's Jeremy Brock.

Alexei Muradov's "The Worm" is the only Russian entry. Polish movie director Andrzej Zulawski chairs the competition jury for the festival, which ends July 2.

AP

Paparazzo nabbed

MALIBU, CALIFORNIA—A PAPARAZZO WAS ARRESTED ON SUSpicion of trespassing while trying to photograph Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie's adopted son, according to Pitt's publicist Cindy Guagenti.

Photographer Clint Brewer, 25, was attempting to take pictures of four-year-old Maddox at a daycare center the child was attending Thursday, said Guagenti.

Brewer was seen hiding in the bushes and photographing the church-based establishment shortly before 11 a.m. when security detained him and the property's owner made a citizen's arrest.

Brewer was transported to the Malibu sheriff's station and released on a $1,000 bail later Thursday.

AP

Striking resemblance

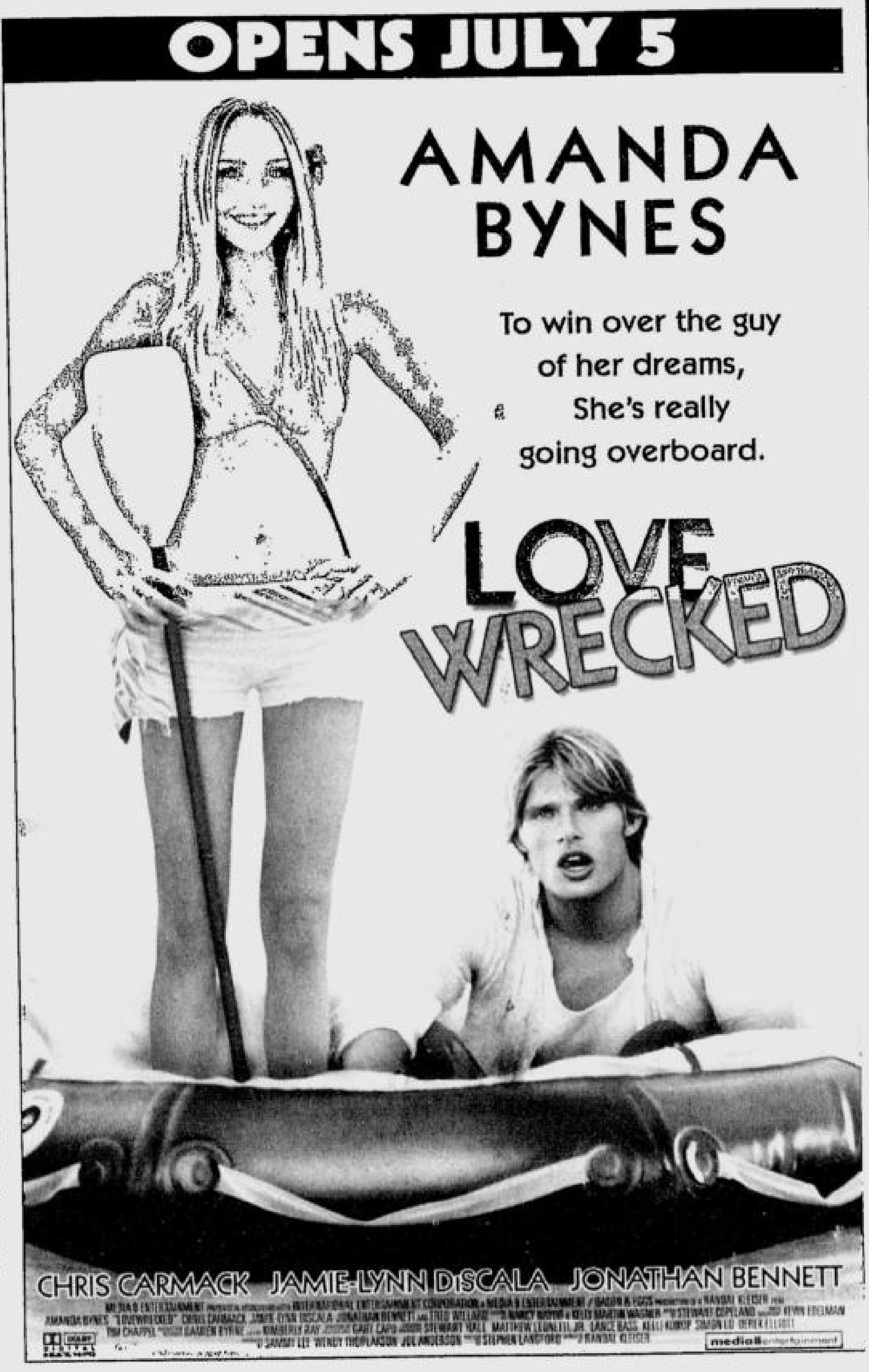
LOS ANGELES—DESPERATE FOR A SUMMER HIT, NBC launched its much-ballyhooed "America's Got Talent" contest to promising numbers on Wednesday, with more than 12 million viewers tuning in to the Regis Philbin-hosted show.

The new show is produced by Simon Cowell, best known as the brutally honest celebrity judge on the Fox smash hit singing contest "American Idol," to which "America's Got Talent" bears a striking resemblance.

The two-hour broadcast was the night's most-watched program on US television and the highest-rated among viewers aged 18 to 49—the prime-time audience that matters most to advertisers, Nielsen Media Research reported Thursday.

Reuters

OPENS JULY 5



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GARFIELD 1:00 / 3:10 / 5:20 / 7:30 / 9:40	KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO 5:10 / 7:25 / 9:40	PACQUIAO 12:20 / 2:40 / 5:00 / 7:20 / 9:40	
CARS 12:20 / 2:45	THE LAKE HOUSE 1:20 / 3:30 / 5:40 / 7:50 / 10:00	THE FAST & THE FURIOUS 3 12:40 / 3:00 / 5:20 / 7:40 / 10:00	THE FAST & THE FURIOUS 3 12:05 / 2:25 / 4:45 THE LAKE HOUSE 7:00 / 9:10

MALL CINEMAS

1	PACQUIAO 11:10 / 1:30 / 3:50 / 6:10 / 8:30	2	SCARY MOVIE 12:25 / 2:30 / 4:35 / 6:40 / 8:45	3	THE FAST & THE FURIOUS 3 12:10 R4 / 1:30 / 3:50 / 6:10 / 8:30
4	KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO 12:05 / 2:15 / 4:25 / 6:35 / 8:45	5	TAKE THE LEAD 12:00 / 2:10 / 4:20 WHORE 6:40 / 8:40		DOLBY DIGITAL DTS SDDS

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2 (DOLBY) CARS / GARFIELD - 2
3 (DOLBY) SCARY MOVIE-4
4 (DOLBY) THE FAST & THE FURIOUS-3
PREMIERE
(DOLBY) AMERICAN HAUNTING

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Cinema 2000 Waltermart Makati
Waltermart Center, Chino Roces Ave. cor. Antonio Arnaiz Pio del Pilar, Makati City
Tel 816.4214 / 816.4216
1 SCARY MOVIE-4
2 LAKE HOUSE
3 KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
4 PACQUIAO

starmall EDSA - SHAW
(Mandaluyong) tel. 7266160
3 SCARY MOVIE-4
4 THE NUN
5 PACQUIAO

metropolis star cinema
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(ALABANG) tel. 8504285, 5433994
1 KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
2 SCARY MOVIE-4
3 THE NUN
4 PACQUIAO

THEATRES
THE OMEN 666
PACQUIAO
3 KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO

PACIFIC MALL LUCENA CINEMAGIC
Pacific Mall Lucena
KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
PACQUIAO
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Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72
1 THE NUN
2 THE FAST & THE FURIOUS-3
3 GARFIELD-2 / X - MEN - 3
4 THE SECRET OF THE CODE
5 SCARY MOVIE-4
6 CARS
7 THE LAKE HOUSE
8 KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
AMERICAN HAUNTING/OMEN 666
10 PACQUIAO

Blue Wave MARIKINA
Sumulong Highway cor. Mayor Gil Fernando Street, Sta. Niño, Marikina City tel. 9341927
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2 (DOLBY) THE NUN
3 (DOLBY) SCARY MOVIE - 4
4 (DOLBY) PACQUIAO

SUPER CINERAMA
Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto tel 7334228
1 (DOLBY) THE NUN
2 SCARY MOVIE - 4
3 KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
4 THE FAST & THE FURIOUS-3
5 PACQUIAO

MARKETPLACE
Mandaluyong
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1 PACQUIAO
2 THE OMEN 666
3 TAKE THE LEAD
4 RESERVED

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274
1 PACQUIAO
2 AMERICAN HAUNTING
3 KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO

Center Mall Cinema
Baguio Center Mall, Magsaysay Avenue (Baguio City) tel (074)-(4449346)
1 SCARY MOVIE - 4
2 THE LAKE HOUSE

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03
1 THE FAST & THE FURIOUS-3
2 KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
3 SCARY MOVIE - 4
4 PACQUIAO

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007
1 KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
2 ALL ABOUT LOVE

EASTWOOD CINEMAS
(Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave (C-5) Quezon City) tel 687.6163 or 72
1 THE FAST & THE FURIOUS-3
2 LAKE HOUSE
3 SCARY MOVIE - 4
4 CARS

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Movie Theatres of the New Millenium

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1 KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
2 PACQUIAO
3 SCARY MOVIE - 4
4 GARFIELD - 2

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel. (049) 4111146
1 PACQUIAO
2 SCARY MOVIE - 4
3 GARFIELD - 2
4 KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771
1 PACQUIAO
2 KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
3 X - MEN - 3 / THE OMEN 666

Cinema 2000 Metrotown
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729
1 CARS/KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
2 PACQUIAO
3 THE OMEN 666
4 GARFIELD - 2

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Plaridel) tel (044) 795.3320
1 CARS
2 PACQUIAO
3 KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Gapan) tel. (044) 4867736
1 KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
2 THE OMEN 666

Llanas Cinema
(Pasig) tel 640.4748
1 AMERICAN HAUNTING
2 GARFIELD - 2

Llanas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 THE OMEN 666
2 HALIK SA LUPA
3 WILD SIDE
4 CHAOS

Llanas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
1 SCARY MOVIE - 4
2 TAGINIT
3 GARFIELD - 2
4 KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
5 PACQUIAO

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
1 THE OMEN 666
2 PACQUIAO
3 SCARY MOVIE - 4
4 KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029
1 THE OMEN 666
2 KIRIDA

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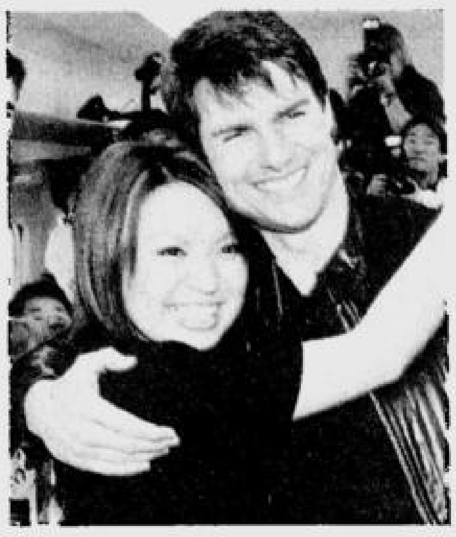
ROBERT Downey Jr. REUTERS

CHRISTINA Aguilera REUTERS

KATE Hudson

Senator Bong thankful to Gretchen Barretto


TOM Cruise with a Japanese fan AFP

RUSHES

SENATOR-ACTOR BONG REVILLA IS thankful to Gretchen Barretto for the success of "Kapag Tumibok Ang Puso (Not Once But Twice)."

But she didn't even get to star in the movie!

Gretchen's non-inclusion—allegedly a result of protests by Senator Bong's wife Lani Mercado—generated tons of free publicity, that's why.

Bong acknowledged that the controversy helped—somehow. "But in the end," he said, "it's a movie's quality that will make people watch. Our film was graded B by the Cinema Evaluation Board."

Okay.

Past tense

Why are people so fascinated with the Bong-Gretchen team-up?

"The past is past," Bong demurred. "We're both married now and Tony Boy (Cojuangco, Gretchen's partner) is a friend."

Greta's comeback

Speaking of La Greta, she is reportedly staging a big-screen comeback in a Metro Manila Film Festival entry.

Abangan.

PARIS Hilton REUTERS

Back together

Bong was also happy to announce that his son Jolo and Grace, daughter of Rosanna Roces—young parents of the senator's grandson—had reconciled after a bitter breakup.

Rosanna confirmed this, saying Grace was now back in school as a "scholar" of the Revillas.

Obviously, the grandparents would all rather see the kids graduate.

Diplomas before another baby.

REESE Witherspoon

Holy cow!

AI-AI de las Alas says one of the most baffling pieces of advice she has received about her love life came from a priest-friend.

He told her: "Your fans would rather have you remain single."

To which the comedian replied: "My love life is public domain?"

Reluctant singer

SINGER Mark Bautista had to ask the help of the audience to coax actress Anne Curtis to join him on stage and sing during a lunch party in their honor, hosted by Viva Records.

We didn't realize the Australian beauty was so shy!

For the song "I Need You," Mark won the Favorite Remake trophy in the last Myx Music Awards.

Anne herself bagged the Favorite Guest Appearance in a Music Video Award.

ROSEANNE Barr AFP

They luv NY, too

PINOY Pop Superstar Grand Champions Jonalyn Viray and Gerald Santos and PPS grand finalists Michael Garcia and Charmaine Piamonte join the cast of GMA 7's romantic soap, "I Luv NY" this week.

The soap stars Jolina Magdangal and Marvin Agustin, Jennylyn Mercado and Mark Herras.

Walk of Fame

LOS ANGELES—Mariah Carey, Sean "Diddy" Combs, Robert Altman and Jamie Foxx lead an eclectic mix of show business figures expected to receive the ultimate recognition of celebrity—a star on Hollywood's Walk of Fame.

The 23 recipients for 2007 also include film stars Michelle Pfeiffer, Michael Caine, Matt Damon and Jamie Foxx; television presenter Barbara Walters and actor Erik Estrada; the 1960s rock group The Doors and screen and stage actress Lilly Tomlin. *AFP*

BRANDON Routh (center) with Kate Bosworth and Kevin Spacey AFP

BONG Revilla

MARK Bautista and Anne Curtis

What, where?

SYDNEY—Media speculation swirled Saturday around Nicole Kidman's hotly anticipated weekend wedding to country music crooner Keith Urban.

Several pages of Saturday's newspapers were filled with possible details of the nuptials, including what the bride would wear, who might be on the guest list, and what will they eat.

Australian media have widely predicted the pair would exchange vows at a gothic-style stone church overlooking Sydney's iconic Manly beach shortly after dusk. *AP*

Frivolous lawsuit

SANTA MONICA—Oscar-winning actress Reese Witherspoon has sued the Star magazine, alleging the tabloid ran a false story saying she is pregnant with her third child.

"It is a frivolous lawsuit," said Mike Kahane, general counsel to the tabloid's parent company, American Media.

Witherspoon claims the story harmed her because it suggested she is hiding information from her producers. *AP*

Props designer

HONG KONG—Hong Kong movie star Jackie Chan said Thursday his keen interest in design has made him devise props for his films for years.

The kung fu actor said art directors often accept props he has designed, according to his official website.

Chan, who has his own design studio called The Jackie Chan Design House, plans to support local design students. *AP*

Whatta babe!

ACTRESS Kate Hudson posed for photographs during an interview for the movie "You, Me and Dupree" in Santa Monica, California. The movie opens across the US on July 14. *Reuters*

Hilton at Hyde

AMERICAN socialite Paris Hilton turned up backstage at the O2 Wireless Festival in Hyde Park, London on Friday. The festival ends today. *Reuters*

'Must List'

SINGERS Nelly Furtado and Christina Aguilera, and actor Robert Downey Jr. attended the Entertainment Weekly "Must List" Event at the Buddha Bar in New York City, also on Friday. Aguilera was a featured performer at the event.

Super Roseann

ROSEANNE Barr was among the celebs at the premiere of "Superman Returns" at the Mann Village Theater in Los Angeles last week. *AFP*

JONALYN Viray

GERALD Santos

JOLO Revilla and Grace Adriano

NICOLE Kidman REUTERS

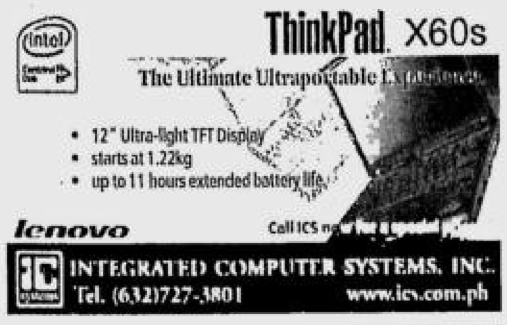
Super preem

SO were actors Brandon Routh, Kate Bosworth and Kevin Spacey, the film's lead trio. *AFP*

What's that in Japanese?

HOLLYWOOD superstar Tom Cruise treats a Japanese fan with his signature toothy smile during a movie promo! That is, aboard of the Shinkansen bullet train from Tokyo to Osaka, last week.

Cruise was in Japan for the promotion of "Mission Impossible III," screening across Japan in July. *AFP*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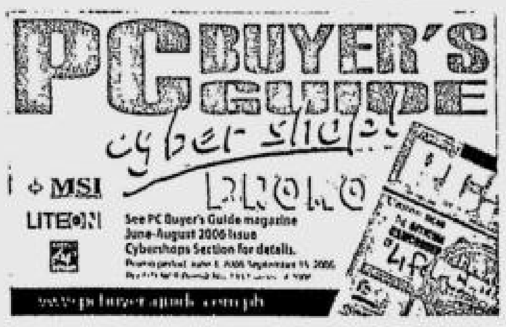
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Gov't gets ₱3.6B from BSP

Dividends package includes 1,500-ha Bulacan property

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO SENTRAL NG PILIPINAS HAS APPROVED THE PAYment to the national government of P3.6 billion in cash and property dividends, representing 75 percent of the monetary authority's net profit for 2005.

Sources from the BSP's policy-making Monetary Board said the turnover of the dividends to the Arroyo administration was approved by the board during its meeting last Thursday and would coincide with the BSP's 13th anniversary celebration on July 3.

BSP Deputy Governor Armando Suratos said that of the dividends, P2.7 billion would be in cash while the rest would be in the form of property.

"This will still be higher compared to P1.6 billion in cash dividends paid last year," Suratos said.

Part of the dividends will include a P749-million property in San Miguel, Bulacan.

"It's a 1,500-hectare property which will be used for the development of housing benefits for the military, teachers and other government employees," Suratos said.

The monetary institution's anniversary celebration on July 3 also marks the first year in office of BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr., who succeeded Rafael Buenaventura.

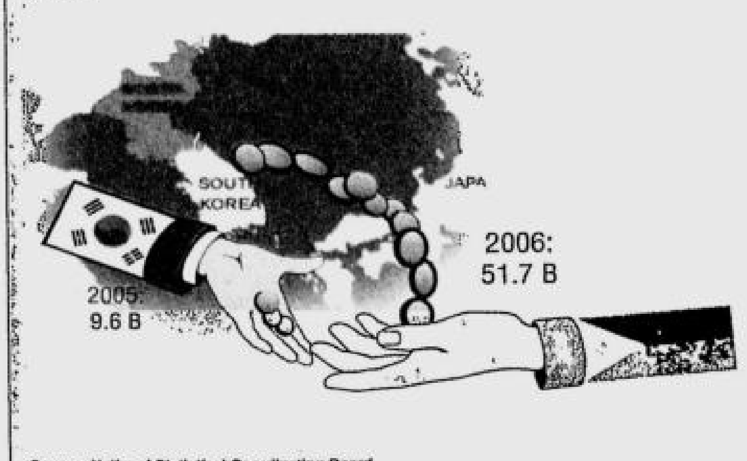
GOV'T/B10

INQUIRER MONITOR

Figures that matter in our nation's life

Approved foreign direct investments double
(First quarter of 2006)

South Korean nationals poured in P51.7 billion worth of investment pledges for the first quarter of 2006, accounting for 81 percent of the total P63.5 billion worth of commitments. USA came in second with P6.4 billion.



Source: National Statistical Coordinating Board
Kate V. Pedroso PDI Research

US firm eyes ₱1-B specialty hospital in Cebu

By Irene R. Sino Cruz
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—THE CARDIOVASCULAR Hospitals of America, which owns four hospitals in the United States, plans to build a P1-billion medical facility here, boosting Cebu's bid to become a medical tourism hub.

Dr. Philip S. Chua, CHA vice president for Far East operations, said CHA has chosen Cebu City as

US FIRM/B10

WHAT'S INSIDE

When your lawyer is their lawyer /B3

BIR misses income tax collection target /B4

No immediate end in sight to Globe-Smart pricing row /B14

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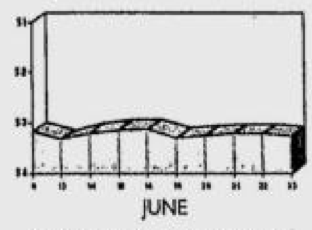

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

₱ 53.26 = $1

As of 5 p.m., June 23, 2006

STOCK MARKET

Subdued trading seen

TRADING IS EXPECTED TO REMAIN SUBdued as investors await the US Fed's move on interest rates this week.

"The market has already discounted a 25-basis point increase in the US benchmark interest rates. But what will be crucial will be the statements from the Fed after the meeting. Comments will be closely examined for clues on the outlook for US rates. The market is worried that there could be more rate hikes going forward and there is the risk of overdoing it and pushing the US economy into a

SUBDUED/ B2

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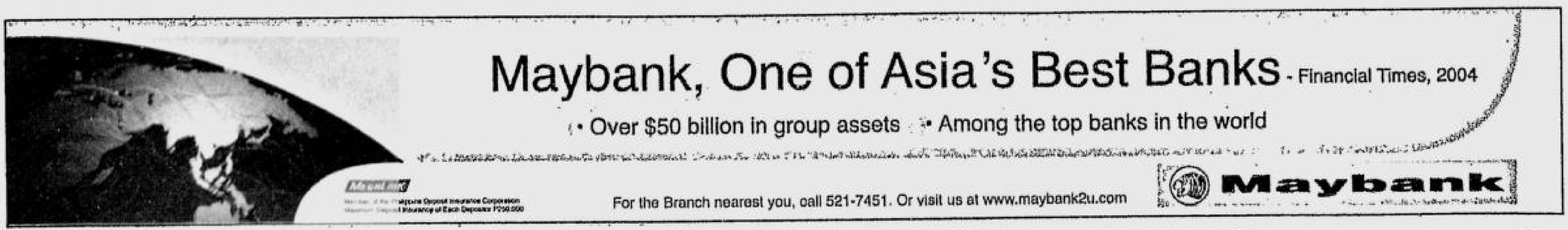
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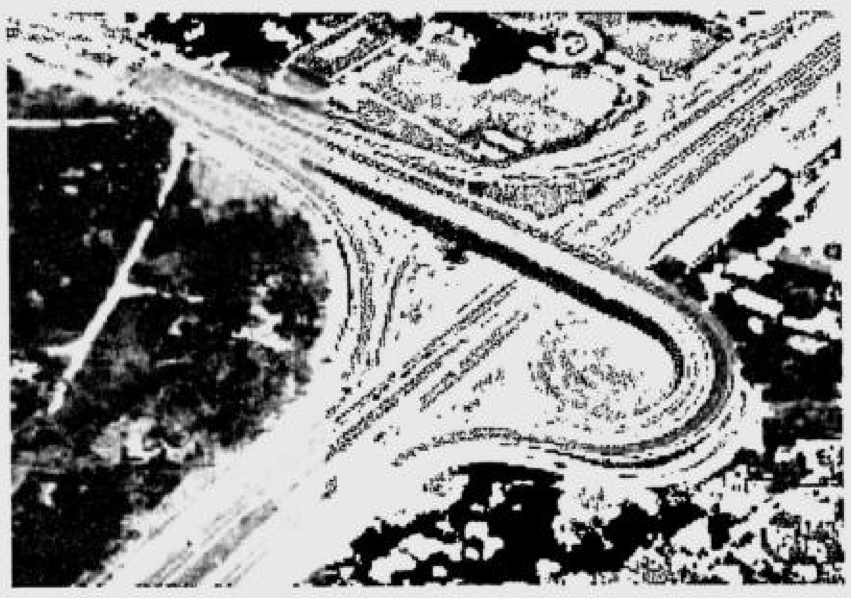
Toll agency gives go-ahead to SLEX rehab

Alabang viaduct repair to start July

By Daxim L. Lucas


ONCE COMPLETED by the end of 2008, the highway will cut travel time from Alabang to Sto. Tomas, Batangas, to 30 minutes from about an hour at present.

THE DELAYED REHABILITATION work on the Marcos-era Alabang viaduct may start in July after the toll road regulator gave its provisional approval for the structure's redesign, according to the firm in charge of the construction.

In an interview, South Luzon Tollways Corp. (SLTC) president Mark Dumol said he has received word that the Toll Regulatory Board (TRB) has approved the new design for the viaduct, which represents the first phase of the rehabilitation of the main road link between Metro Manila and southern Luzon.

"Our understanding is that there is already partial approval [for the engineering design] during the board meeting last Thursday, but we haven't received official notice," he said. "We expect to receive the approval by next week, so, that will be a (go-ahead) to start the construction of the viaduct."

The agreement with SLTC mandates that the final engineering design must be reviewed by an independent consultant, French engineering firm BCEOM, and endorsed to the TRB for approval.

Only when the TRB gives its final clearance can the actual construction begin.

The redesign involves the use of stronger foundations and the use of better grade steel on the structure.

Meanwhile, Dumol said SLTC would sign this week a memorandum of agreement with Filinvest Development Corp. for the use of its sprawling Muntinlupa City township project as an alternative route during the rehabilitation of the viaduct, which is only a stone's throw from the property.

"We've been discussing this for the past few months," he said. "We hope that they will be reasonable."

He said SLTC has virtually given in to all the demands of Filinvest for the use of a portion of the property for the traffic-rerouting scheme, including the installation of signage, facilities for telecommunications, power cables, water and sewage lines, and street lights.

"All in all, more than P50 million will be used for the development of the Filinvest property," he said. "That, we will shoulder."

Dumol said he was hoping that SLTC would no longer have to lease the land from Filinvest since the proposed rerouting scheme would actually benefit the property developer and its project, which remains underutilized in the wake of the 1997 East Asian financial crisis.

The property being considered as an alternative route during the Alabang viaduct construction is an 800-square meter section of the Filiinvest Corporate City.

The entire SLEX rehab project will cost P8 billion and calls for the rehabilitation of the Alabang viaduct, the widening of the South Luzon Expressway from Alabang to Calamba, and the extension of the highway up to the Southern Tagalog Arterial Road.

Once completed by the end of 2008, the highway will cut travel time from Alabang to Sto. Tomas, Batangas, to 30 minutes from about an hour at present.

Subdued trading seen

From page B1

recession," AB Capital Securities said in a weekly note to clients.

Locally, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) will also be meeting to decide on its own overnight rates.

AB Capital said the consensus in the market was that the BSP would not raise interest rates.

"As long as there isn't a major surprise on interest rates, stocks may attempt to rebound some more. Investors are also likely going to keep an eye on the unfolding drama surrounding the second impeachment case against President Macapagal-Arroyo. Support is at 2,030 while resistance is at 2,200," it added.

AB Capital said stocks might consolidate as they try to recover from the recent drop to six-month lows.

Global markets regained their footing last week after Wall Street's own recovery above the 11,000 level.

Week on week, the Philippine Stock Exchange index (PSEi) lost 8.3 points to 2,113.17 on thin volume, with foreign selling limiting the market's attempts to rally. *Elizabeth L. Sanchez*

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COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

MANY IN THE AUDIENCE WERE surprised when lawyer Lorna Kapunan, the partner of the late Sen. Raul Roco, stood up to defend Ferdinand Martin Romualdez during the recent Equitable PCIBank shareholders' meeting.

Kapunan even argued with Equitable PCIBank lawyers for Romualdez's right to be elected to the board despite Romualdez's sequestration setback.

Even SM heiress and bank vice chair Teresita Sy was puzzled by Kapunan's presence, and even kidded Romualdez about Kapunan representing herself as a stockholder but acting, *sub rosa*, as "one of your angels."

Then, out of the blue last week, guess who appears with the Lopezes in their fight to reclaim the very same block of Equitable PCIBank being held by Romualdez?

Kapunan's name partner, Barbara Anne Migallos. What is going on here? This, incidentally, is not the first time that the Roco Kapunan Migallos law firm had been caught representing two opposing sides.

Then Bangko Sentral Governor Rafael Buenaventura was upset to learn that Roco Kapunan Migallos, which was being retained by the Central Bank, issued an opinion at the behest of Banco Filipino, which was and still is fighting the Central Bank.

With a BF housing subsidiary ostensibly as the client, Roco Kapunan Migallos issued a legal opinion saying, yes, Banco Filipino can sue the Bangko Sentral for P18 billion in damages as successor-in-interest of the defunct Central Bank.

Kapunan could not be reached last week as the lawyer was said to have made a sudden trip to Switzerland.

Hmmmm, what could be there in Switzerland other than chocolates and watches?

Philex opens up another front

THE Romualdezes seem to be getting hit from all sides now.

After the Lopezes spooked the Romualdezes on the latter's Equitable PCIBank shareholdings, it is Philex's turn to sue the Romualdez-controlled Benguet Corp., over the alleged illegal conversion of Benguet's Baguio mine into a water reservoir.

While acknowledging that it had leased the mine site and mineral rights to Benguet, Philex maintains that it still retains the surface rights over the disputed site, which Benguet hopes to supply Baguio with potable water.

Philex president J. Ernesto Villaluna confirmed that the Benguet complaint was filed last week at the Baguio Regional Trial Court. Equitable PCIBank, incidentally, holds a board seat in Philex, represented by bank president Rene Buenaventura.

Guess who is the corporate secretary of Philex?

Barbara Anne Migallos.

More La Salle intramurals

THE alumni fight in De La Salle University is not about pro- or anti-GMA, as reported in this space Friday, but about the La Salle Brothers going into partisan politics and using the campus and the students for their political activism.

This is the claim of one of the architects, whose identity is said to be known among the La Salle Brothers themselves, of the web-based signature campaign.

"Our beef is simply about the La Salle Christian Brothers who have strayed from the La Sallian credo of 'religio, mores et cultura'," said the La Salle alumni, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Money-go-round

- THE law firm that lost the P100-million tax case of RCBC in the Supreme Court because of late filing is the Salvador Guevara & Associates.

"Butch" Guevara, incidentally, was a former deputy BIR commissioner during Rene Bañez's time, while Serafin Salvador is currently a tax professor at the University of the Philippines.

- DESPITE soaring gas prices, Honda is in-

COCKTALES/ B5

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Photo shows CalEnergy President Joseph Sullivan, along with DA Sec. Domingo Panganiban, NIA Administrator Baltazar Usis posing with the winners of the Casecnan Awards.

CalEnergy honors top irrigators associations

CalEnergy International, operator of the Casecnan Multipurpose Irrigation and Hydroelectric Power Project, recently led the presentation of the 2006 Casecnan Awards for Outstanding Irrigators' Associations during the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) anniversary festivities last June 22, 2006.

In cooperation with NIA, CalEnergy established the annual Casecnan Awards to recognize the remarkable performance, exemplary leadership and skillful management of Irrigators' Associations (IAs) under the wing of NIA. Awardee on that is built to last," said CalEnergy President Joseph Sullivan.

Joining Sullivan in handing the Casecnan Awards were Department of Agriculture Secretary Domingo Panganiban, NIA Administrator Baltazar Usis and other NIA officials.

This year, seven awards were given to the following irrigators' associations: Buluan-Pigkawayan IA (Hall of Fame Awardee), Dujali-Isidro-Talisay-Casay IA (Most Outstanding IA, National Category), Bonga-Pump #1 IA (1st runner-up, National Category), Sta. Justina Farmers IA (2nd runner-up, National Category), BOAN BIDA IA (Most Outstanding IA, Communal Category), San Agustin-Ruparan Barangay IA (1st runner-up, Communal Category), and Del Carmen IA (2nd runner-up, Communal Category).

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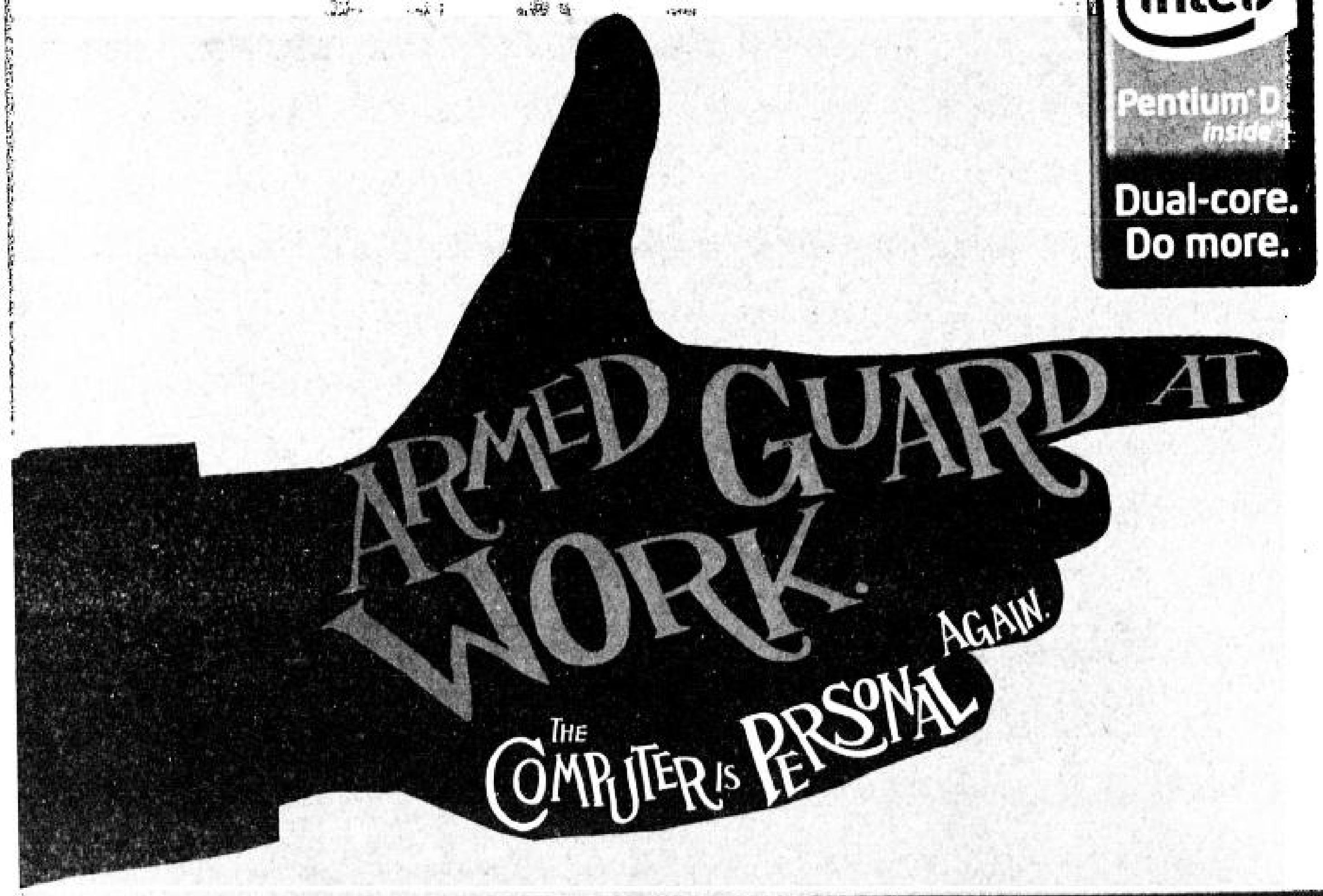
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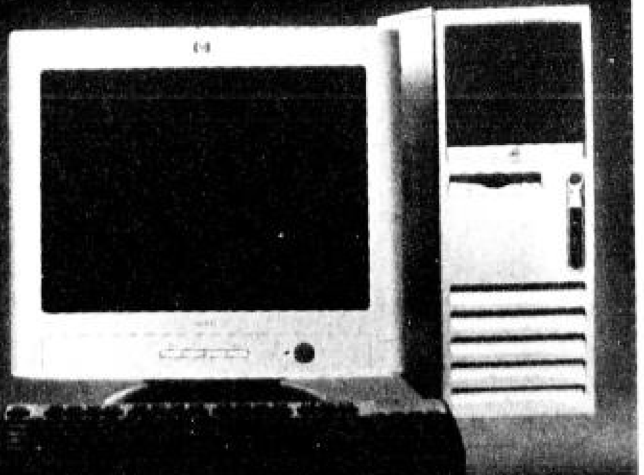

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MB_NVT057 HOUSE & LOT
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L.A. 329 sqm.
Camarin Road, BGY. CAMARIN
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L.A. 329 sqm. F.A. 194 sqm.
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MB_RIZ081 INDSL WAREHOUSE
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MB_RIZ078 RSDL LOT
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Azucena St., BEVERLY HILLS SUBD.
Min. Bid Price: P1,500,000

MB_RIZ072 RSDL LOT
L.A. 422 sqm.
Apo cor. Banahaw Sts.
TOWN & COUNTRY HILLS
Min. Bid Price: P850,000

MB_RIZ073 HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 400 sqm. F.A. 340 sqm.
Agnesville St., AGNESVILLE SUBD.
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Min. Bid Price: P1,300,000

MB_RIZ076 RSD'L. LOT
L.A. 576 sqm.
Michigan Bend cor. Arkansas St.
PALOS VERDES EXEC. VILLAGE
Min. Bid Price: P1,100,000

MB_RIZ079 HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 320 sqm. F.A. 68 sqm.
Gen. Gregorio II, Del Pilar St.
KATARUNGAN VILLAGE
Min. Bid Price: P980,000

BINANGONAN, RIZAL

MB_RIZ074 HOUSE & LOT
L.A 1,200 sqm. F.A. 934 sqm.
Along Provincial Road
BGY. CALUMPANG
Min. Bid Price: P6,350,000

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MB_RIZ080 HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 256 sqm. F.A. 968 sqm.
Maganda St., RIVERSIDE SUBD.
Min. Bid Price: P4,000,000

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MB_RIZ075 HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 240 sqm. F.A. 250 sqm.
D. Mark St., BANKERS VILL PH5
Gitnang Bayan 1
Min. Bid Price: P900,000

MB_RIZ077 RSDL LOT W/ IMPRVT
L.A. 202 sqm. F.A. n/a
FLORENCIO SUBD., Bgy. Malanday
Min. Bid Price: P200,000

VALENZUELA

MB_VAL082 RSDL LOT W/ IMPRVT
L.A. 3,012 sqm. F.A. n/a
Lot 5 BGY. BIGNAY
Min. Bid Price: P3,000,000

MB_VAL083 HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 345 sqm. F.A. 154 sqm.
G. Cruz St., ANGELES SUBD.
Bgy. Dalandanan, Bo. Pasolo
Min. Bid Price: P1,400,000

MB_VAL084 HOUSE & LOT
L.A.250 sqm. F.A. 268 sqm.
Gov. I. Santiago cor. Lilac Sts.
MALINTA
Min. Bid Price: P1,600,000

MB_VAL085 INDSL WAREHOUSE
L.A. 2,514 sqm. F.A. 2,132 sqm
FRANCO ENT. COMPOUND
Bgy. Bagbaguin
Min. Bid Price: P5,000,000

MB_VAL086 INDSL WAREHOUSE
L.A. 8,935 sqm. F.A. 2,158 sqm.
Alarcon St., Sitio Sto. Rosario
BGY. MAISAN
Min. Bid Price: P20,000,000

CALATAGAN, BATANGAS

MB_BAT001 RSDL / AGRI-LOT
L.A. 17,583 sqm.
(near Bucal Elem. Schl)
Brgy. Bucal, CALATAGAN
Min. Bid Price: P5,300,000

LIPA CITY, BATANGAS

MB_BAT002 AGRI-LOT
L.A. 16,742 sqm.
Provincial Rd. (going to Padre Garcia)
BGY. ANTIPOLO DEL SUR
Min. Bid Price: P5,100,000

MB_BAT 003 HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 248 sqm. F.A. 466 sqm.
LOBRIN SUBD., Bgy. Sico
Min. Bid Price: P 4,000,000

ANGAT, BULACAN

MB_BUL015 HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 2,157 sqm. F.A.1,450 sqm.
(Near Sun Jin Meals)
BGY. PULONG YANTOK
Min. Bid Price: P3,500,000

BALAGTAS, BULACAN

MB_BUL005 COMML LOT
L.A 5,555 sqm. (near "THE MARKET PLACE" Bldg.)
BGY. BUROL 1ST.
Min. Bid Price: P14,000,000

BALIUAG, BULACAN

MB_BUL009 HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 446 sqm. F.A. 274 sqm.
RUSTIA COR. GEN. PELAGIO CRUZ STS.
Min. Bid Price: P1,000,000

MB_BUL010 INDL LOT w/ BLDG
L.A. 5,905 sqm. F.A. 2,241 sqm.
BGY. SAN ROQUE (near Josefa Casiano schl.)
Min. Bid Price: P3,500,000

MB_BUL014 RSDL LOT
L.A. 351 sqm.
Topaz St., DOÑA ENRIQUETA SUBD.
Min. Bid Price: P527,000

MB_BUL021 HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 392.50 sqm. F.A. 332.94 sqm.
Dr. Gonzalez St., BGY. SABANG
Min. Bid Price: P2,000,000

MB_BUL023 RSDL LOT W/ IMPRVT
L.A. 2,814 sqm. F.A. 2,040 sqm.
Bgy. Concepcion (near Mun. Hall)
Min. Bid Price: P9,500,000

MB_BUL02 RSDL W/ IMPRVT
L.A. 3,599 sqm. F.A. n/a
BGY. CONCEPCION
Min. Bid Price: P8,500,000

MARILAO, BULACAN

MB_BUL004 AGRILOT
L.A. 18,611 sqm.
(near Dolmar Subd.)
Rufino Espiritu St.
BGY. LOMA DE GATO
Min. Bid Price: P5,000,000

MB_BUL25 HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 355 sqm. F.A. 190 sqm.
Dela Rosa St. cor Unnamed Road
DELA ROSA SUBD. Bgy. Abangan Sur
Min Bid Price: P750,000.00

MEYCAUAYAN, BULACAN

MB_BUL008 INDSL LOT
L.A. 1,000 sqm.
(near Bancal Elem. Schl)
BANCAL ROAD, Bgy. Bancal
Min. Bid Price: P2,000,000

MB_BUL008 INDSL WAREHOUSE
L.A. 3,330 sqm. F.A. 1,817 sqm.
Prov'l. Road, BGY. HULO
(near Municipal Hall)
Min. Bid Price: P7,500,000

MB_BUL012 RSDL LOT W/ IMPRVT
L.A. 275 sqm. F.A. n/a
(near St. James Clinic)
AZUCENA ST. Bgy. Bancal
Min. Bid Price: P370,000

MB_BUL013 HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 252 sqm. F.A. 521sqm.
(near NLEX Meycauayan Exit)
Corinthian St., MT. CARMEL SUBD.
Min. Bid Price: P2,250,000

PAOMBONG, BULACAN

MB_BUL020 HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 1,499 sqm. F.A. 811.4 sqm.
Prov'l. Road. (Calle Rizal)
Bgy. Poblacion, PAOMBONG
Min. Bid Price: P5,500,000

SAN JOSE DEL MONTE, BULACAN

MB_BUL027 HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 720 sqm F.A. 264 sqm.
Magenta St., PECSONVILLE SUBD.
Min. Bid Price: P2,000,000

MB_BUL028 HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 655 sqm F.A. 500 sqm.
Canary St., cor. Silver / Nawasa Rd.
PECSONVILLE SUBD.
Min. Bid Price: P2,500,000

SAN MIGUEL, BULACAN

MB_BUL029 RSDL LOT W/ IMPRVT
L.A. 1,613 sqm. F.A. n/a
CAGAYAN VALLEY RD., Bgy. Sta. Rita
(near San Miguel Distric Hosp.)
Min. Bid Price: P816,000.00

SAN RAFAEL, BULACAN

MB_BUL007 INDSL LOT W/ BLDG
L.A. 6,000 sqm. F.A. 1,029 sqm.
Poblacion Road, BGY. CAPIHAN
(Near Villa del Carmen Resort)
Min. Bid Price: P5,600,000

CARMONA, CAVITE

MB_CVT034 GOLF ESTATE RSDL LOT
L.A. 1,091 sqm.
MANILA SOUTHWOODS Ph3.
Bgy. Cabilang Baybay
Min. Bid Price: P4,900,000

DASMARIÑAS, CAVITE

MB_CVT0035 RSDL LOT
L.A. 400 sqm.
Steepe Road
ORCHARD RSD'L. ESTATE SUBD.
Min. Bid Price: P800,000

MB_CVT0039 RSDL LOT
L.A. 560 sqm.
Steepe Road
ORCHARD RSD'L. ESTATE SUBD.
Min. Bid Price: P840,000

MB_CVT042 RSDL. LOT
L.A 250 sqm. (2lots available)
MORANTE SUBD., Bgy. Burol
Min. Bid Price: P375,000 each

IMUS, CAVITE

MB_CVT040 17 UNIT TOWNHOUSE
L.A. 1,890 sqm. F.A. 1,735 sqm.
MEDICION RD., Bgy. Medicion 2nd
Min. Bid Price: P14,500,000

MB_CVT044 RSDL LOT
L.A. 180 sqm.
Neighborhood "C"
THE PARK PLACE VILLAGE
Min. Bid Price: P700,000

NAIC, CAVITE

MB_CVT036 VARIOUS RSDL LOT
L.A. 23,626 sqm.
UNIWIDE SALES COASTAL CITY
Bgy. Timalan, Naic. Cavite
Min. Bid Price: P21,300,000

SILANG, CAVITE

MB_CVT036 RSDL LOT
L.A. 4,905 sqm.
BGY LALAAN, 1ST
Min. Bid Price: P4,000,000

TRECE MARTIREZ, CAVITE

MB_CVT037 RSDL LOT
L.A. 8,641 sqm.
SHERWOOD HILLS RSD'L. ESTATE & GOLF COUNTRY CLUB
Min. Bid Price: P10,500,000

CABUYAO, LAGUNA

MB_LGN045 COMM'L. LOT
L.A. 520 sqm.
J.P. RIZAL ST., Población
Min. Bid Price: P4,700,000

SAN PEDRO, LAGUNA

MB_LGN049 RSDL LOT
L.A. 872 sqm.
Austin & Montessa St., SOUTH PEAK II
Min. Bid Price: P2,700,000

MB_LGN051 HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 521 F.A. 443 sqm.
Sampaguita Ave., SAMPAGUITA VILL.
Min. Bid Price: P2,100,000

BONGABON, NUEVA ECIJA

MB_NE100 RSDL LOT
L.A. 779 sqm.
Bgy. Sinipit, Poblacion, BONGABON
Min. Bid Price: P250,000

CABIAO, NUEVA ECIJA

MB_NE092 RSDL LOT
L.A. 950 sqm.
BGY. STA. RITA
Min. Bid Price: P685,000

MB_NE104 RSDL / COMML BLDG.
L.A. 1,048 sqm. F.A. 788 sqm.
OLONGAPO-GAPAN ROAD cor Road lot 2 Bgy. Sta. Rita
Min. Bid Price: P2,400,000

MB_NE109 INDSL LOT w/ WRHSE
L.A. 1,000 sqm. F.A. 490 sqm.
Along Prov'l Rd. (San Jose City - Lupao Rd.) Bgy. Parista, LUPAO
Min. Bid Price: P800,000

CABANATUAN, NUEVA ECIJA

MB_NE087 AGRI-LOT w/ POULTRY HOUSES
L.A. 20,000 sqm. F.A. 2,363 sqm.
BGY. CABU
Min. Bid Price: P2,000,000

MB_NE089 RSDL LOT
L.A. 450 sqm. (various TCT)
AGL HEIGHTS PHASE. II
Bgy., Caalibangbangan
Min. Bid Price: P800,000

MB_NE090 HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 200 sqm. F.A. 360 sqm.
MABINI ST.
Min. Bid Price: P4,000,000

MB_NE101 HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 228 sqm. F.A. 199 sqm.
Ubas St., VILLA BENITA SUBD.
Min. Bid Price: P1,000,000

MB_NE103 HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 750 F.A. 98 sqm.
Melencio Extension
KAPITAN PEPE SUBD.
Min. Bid Price: P1,550,000

MB_NE105 RSDL / COMML BLDG.
L.A. 703 sqm. F.A. 466 sqm.
Don Manuel Ave. cor. Christine St.
KAPITAN PEPE SUBD.
Min. Bid Price: P1,800,000

MB_NE106 RSDL / INDSL LOT
L.A. 11,151 sqm.
Bgy. Kalidkid-Fort, Magsaysay Rd.
KALIDKID SUR
Min. Bid Price: P2,000,000

GAPAN, NUEVA ECIJA

MB_NE096 RSDL / COMML BLDG.
L.A. 1,496 sqm. F.A. 630 sqm.
MAHARLIKA HIGHWAY
Min. Bid Price: P2,200,000

MB_NE097 RSDL / AGRI-LOT
L.A. 8,371 sqm.
MAHARLIKA HI-WAY, Bgy. Sto. Cristo
Min. Bid Price: P2,600,000

SAN JOSE CITY, NUEVA ECIJA

MB_NE088 HOTEL BLDG.
L.A. 400 sqm. F.A. 1,154 sqm.
Along Maharlika Highway
BGY. MASALIN
Min. Bid Price: P5,100,000

MB_NE091 RSDL LOT
L.A. 736 sqm.
Javaldi St., CURAMEN SUBD.
Min. Bid Price: P860,000

MB_NE093 HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 437 sqm. F.A. 142 sqm.
Sanchez Ave. ST. CECILIA VILLAGE
Min. Bid Price: P1,030,000

MB_NE094 RSDL LOT
L.A. 460 sqm.
BGY. CALOACAN
Min. Bid Price: P700,000

MB_NE095 RSDL LOT
L.A. 229 sqm.
Sanchez Ave., ST. CECILIA VILLAGE
Min.Bid Price: P350,000

MB_NE102 HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 442 sqm. F.A. 185 sqm.
Cervantes St., SAN JOSE CITY
Min. Bid Price: P2,000,000

SAN LEONARDO, NUEVA ECIJA

MB_NE107 INDSL LOT w/WHSE
L.A. 15,409 sqm. F.A. 750 sqm.
MAHARLIKA H-WAY Bgy. San Anton
Min. Bid Price: P5,000,000

LUCENA CITY

MB_QP114 HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 119 sqm. F.A. 117 sqm.
Granja St., LUCENA CITY
Min. Bid Price: P2,000,000

MB_QP116 HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 328 sqm. F.A. 216 sqm.
SACRED HEART SUBD.
Bgy. Gulang-gulang
Min. Bid Price: P1,200,000

MB_QP0119 HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 374 sqm. F.A. 278 sqm.
Loreta St., CAPITOL HOMESITE SUBD.
Min, Bid Price: P760,000

MB_QP120 HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 270 sqm. F.A. 292 sqm.
Barcelona St. LUCENA CITY
Min. Bid Price: P1,400,000

MB_QP121 HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 124 sqm. F.A. 462 sqm.
Barcelona St. LUCENA CITY
Min. Bid Price: P2,500,000

MB_QP122 HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 251 sqm. F.A. 399.5 sqm.
Barcelona St. LUCENA CITY
Min. Bid Price: P1,500,000

MAUBAN, QUEZON

MB_QP115 HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 292 sqm. F.A. 384 sqm.
Along Provincial Road
Bgy. Polo, MAUBAN
Min. Bid Price: P1,200,000

PAGBILAO, QUEZON

MB_QP117 RSDL LOT
L.A. 100 sqm.
Bgy. Alupaya, PAGBILAO
Min. Bid Price: P250,000

TAYABAS, QUEZON

MB_QP118 RSDL LOT
L.A 1,825 sqm. F.A. 1,707.2 sqm.
Bgy. Wakas, TAYABAS
Min. Bid Price: P3,500,000

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Traffic and the economy

NO FREE LUNCH

Cielito F. Habito

LITTLE DO THEY REALIZE IT, BUT much of the country's economic prospects depend on our Metro Manila traffic enforcers.

It is not our economic managers who will more critically determine the course of our economic well-being in the years ahead, but those tasked with enforcing our laws and rules of behavior. This is because much of what is wrong with the Philippine economy traces to simple rules not being enforced or observed. If we are unable to enforce simple traffic rules, for example, how can we expect to enforce tax laws?

Two sides

There are two sides to the matter, of course: enforcement is one side, and compliance or obedience is the other. As a daily victim of Metro Manila's anarchic traffic myself, it is quite clear to me that the city's anarchic traffic traces not so much to excessive volume as to simple traffic mismanagement. Traffic would flow much more smoothly if only rules of the road were properly observed and enforced. How many times have you been caught in a traffic slowdown, only to find out upon reaching the choke point that it could all have been avoided with a little proactive traffic management?

Why is it that the same driver who runs red lights and weaves in and out of lanes in Metro Manila turns docile and obedient to the rules when brought to the United States, or Hong Kong, or even just Subic? And the driver's level of education or socioeconomic class has nothing to do with it. You see it happen with people driving Ford Expeditions as much as with those driving jeepneys.

Consistent enforcement

The difference, of course, is enforcement. But more than just enforcement, it has to be consistent, predictable enforcement. If he expects not to be able to get away with a traffic violation, or if caught, get away with a small bribe, the driver wouldn't even risk a minor infraction.

Some time back, they began apprehending motorists overtaking on the paved shoulder of the South Luzon Expressway (SLEX). It was quite noticeable how most motorists stopped doing it, fearing the P550 fine. I should know; I had to shell out that amount for my driver once. He stopped doing it when I warned him he would have to pay the fine out of his salary next time.

'Ningas cogon'

True to form, enforcement of that rule went the way of the usual *ningas cogon*. Things have long returned to normal on that highway. And here, normal means that the slowest lane is the innermost lane, while the fastest lane is the emergency shoulder where no one is even supposed to pass. They might as well take down all those signs saying "left lane for overtaking only" and "shoulder for emergency use only," which are all over the expressway. Hardly anyone pays attention to them anyway.

My pet peeve, drivers who create a new counterflow lane at the first sign of a traffic slowdown, wouldn't be doing it if they were arrested for obstructing traffic, as they should be. But how many times have we seen this happen simply because no traffic enforcers were around, or even when there, make no effort to stop them? How many traffic gridlocks have occurred because of this behavior on both sides of the road?

High density

To be sure, poor planning has an important role in the problem as well. Ateneo president Fr. Ben Nebres points out that Katipunan Avenue traffic is so bad because the high-density area is served by what was designed to be a low-density transport system—i.e. designed to be dominated by cars and smaller passenger vehicles. Consistent traffic enforcement is critical, but in the long run, an efficient mass transport system must be the main answer, just as it has been in the big cities of the world.

Don't get me wrong; I don't claim traffic to be our most important impediment to economic development. Still, Neda's estimates of the economic value of time lost to traffic delays have always been a significant portion of GDP. But our inability to solve the traffic problem, tracing to our inability to consistently enforce simple rules, has far larger implications beyond traffic itself. If we are to achieve the progress we all hope for, we need leaders who can ensure consistent enforcement of our laws (starting with obeying them themselves), from traffic rules all the way to tax laws. This seems to be the main appeal of MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando and Sen. Ping Lacson as "presidentiables" in the eyes of not a few Filipinos.

Too much democracy?

Grand old man of Philippine business Washington Sycip is more blunt about the matter: he often suggests that we may be enjoying too much democracy for our own good. While some may disagree, what he is really pointing out is that if our nation is to advance, we all need to do one simple thing: we need to obey the rules. And (Filipino) human nature being what it is, we all need to be forced to do so—and consistently.

Comments welcome at chabito@ateneo.edu

BIR misses income tax collection target

By Michelle V. Remo

THE GOVERNMENT'S INCOME TAX collection in the first five months of the year fell short of target despite the recent increase in the corporate income tax rate from 32 to 35 percent.

Documents from the Bureau of Internal Revenue showed that income tax remitted to the government from January to May amounted to only P143.4 billion. This was was 6.5 percent or P10 billion lower than the P153.4-billion target.

In a report to President Macapagal-Arroyo, Revenue Commissioner Jose Mario Buñag noted though that income tax collections for the first five months of the year was 16.6 percent or P20.4 billion higher than the P123 billion generated in the same period last year.

The corporate income tax rate was raised by 3 percentage points last November to help shore up revenue collections and allow the government to achieve a balanced budget by 2008.

The increase in the corporate income tax rate is a minor provision of the VAT Reform Law, which basically raised the value-added tax rate from 10 to 12 percent and expanded the coverage of the tax to include previously exempted products like oil and electricity.

Buñag earlier said the imposition of new revenue-raising measures would take time before actually making an impact on the government's collection figures.

Revenue authorities said the failure to meet the expected income tax revenues had to do partly with the sudden increase in tax credit claims by corporate taxpayers.

The Department of Finance, head agency of the BIR, has ordered a revalidation of all existing tax credit certificates (TCCs) and an inventory of TCCs issued by the government following the suspicious rise in tax credit claims. All TCCs would be canceled starting Aug. 1 and replaced with new certificates carrying tighter security features.

Nestor Valeroso, head of the BIR's Quezon City office who recommended measures to improve income tax collection, said there were programs lined up to address the shortfall.

These included the surveillance of firms whose income declarations and tax payments fell significantly short of industry average, as well as investigation of companies that claimed to have stopped operations.

He noted that false claims of "no operation" could be a huge source of revenue leaks, noting that in one district in Quezon City alone, there were more than a thousand firms that declared to have stopped their operations.

During the first five months, excise tax collections hit P22.8 billion, higher than the target of P22.2 billion. VAT collections reached P55.5 billion, higher than the P52-billion target, while percentage tax collections amounted to P17.9 billion compared with the target of P15.7 billion. Collections of other taxes reached P14.4 billion, higher than the P11.7 billion goal.

Increased fund flows among developing countries to benefit RP

By Doris C. Dumlao

A NEW GLOBAL PHENOMENON called south-to-south flows, or rapidly rising capital flows among developing countries, has opened up opportunities for the Philippines to better hedge against external shocks by attracting "more stable" investments, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas said.

This favorable phenomenon, identified in the newly released World Bank Global Development Finance (GDF) 2006 as a potential global catalyst alongside deepening financial integration among developing countries, has been gaining momentum in the Philippines in recent years, BSP Deputy Governor Diwa Guinigundo said.

Although south-to-south capital flows remained relatively small compared to north-to-south flows, the GDF said "they have the potential to change the landscape of development finance over the next few years, particularly if growth in developing countries continues to outstrip that in advanced countries and the trend toward deeper trade and financial integration persists."

"For much of its post-war history, development finance has been characterized as a one-way flow of capital from industrial countries to the developing world. But as developing countries have become integrated with the global economy, they have emerged as important sources of capital flows in their own right," the GDF said.

In the past decade, the GDF noted that with rising incomes in developing countries and increasingly open policies toward trade and financial markets, developing countries were becoming a significant source of foreign direct investment (FDI), bank lending and even official development assistance to other developing countries.

Guinigundo said the Philippines was benefiting from this new phenomenon, which was providing some "stabilizing influence."

"Look at the intra-Asean (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) trade and intra-Asean investments. Ten years ago, the numbers were negligible. Now it has improved a lot especially those coming from Malaysia and Singapore. The same is true with China," Guinigundo said.

The BSP executive agreed that such development flows were more stable because they were coming from emerging markets that posted robust growths in the past and now holding vast amounts of liquidity—citing China's $900 billion in foreign reserves and India's $300-$400 billion.

"It is a new phenomenon in a sense that in the last five to 10 years these emerging markets have expanded and have accumulated a great amount of liquidity held mostly in US treasuries," Guinigundo said.

"So, in a sense, one can say that the emerging markets have been doing their share in adjusting to the so-called global imbalances by accumulating reserves and allowing some strengthening of their domestic currencies. They have (in a way) also funded the current account and fiscal account deficits of the United States," he explained.

BSP director for research Iluminada Sicat said that in the case of FDIs, the most significant increases in the last five years were coming from newly industrializing countries (NICs) like Singapore, Taiwan and Hong Kong.

In general, she said FDI flows to the country were going to manufacturing, real estate and banking. Based on BSP documents, FDI flows from three Asian NICs (South Korea, Hong Kong and Taiwan) to the Philippines surged to $258.1 million in 2005 from only $48.7 million in 2000. Net foreign portfolio investments from these Asian NICs also surged to $257 million last year from only $52.35 million in 2000.

Metrobank, SM Prime sign ₱3-B notes float deal

Biggest fund raising of this nature in RP

METROPOLITAN Bank & Trust Co. and publicly listed SM Prime Holdings Inc. have signed a facility agreement for the issuance of P3 billion worth of SM Prime floating rate notes (FRN) due 2011.

The FRN issue, which was arranged as a private placement, was funded solely by Metrobank. First Metro Investment Corp. served as the arranger.

SM Prime's FRN flotation is the largest fund raising of this nature in the local debt market in recent years. Proceeds from the issue will be used by SM Prime for general corporate requirements.

SM Prime, the country's leading shopping mall developer and operator, is part of the SM Group.

"This is the first complete, major underwriting by the Metrobank Group for the SM Group," said SM Prime president Hans T. Sy.

The Metrobank Group had been previously involved in other SM Group deals albeit in other capacities.

Sy said that, "The transaction officially starts the working relationship between the second generation of the Sy and Ty families and we look forward to many more future transactions, not only in banking, but also in partnership of other ventures."

Metrobank president Arthur Ty, for his part, said the bank values the business of the SM Group. "It is a privilege to do business with them," he said.

"This is the first long-term transaction of Metrobank with the SM Group, and we hope to continue from here and expand this relationship," he added.

SM Prime's FRNs is among the major contracts signed recently by the Metrobank Group. The bank is seen to do more sizeable and important deals with top-tier companies as part of its growth strategy.

Recently, it reorganized its account management group to cater to different market segments including top-tier corporations, multinationals, middle markets, and entrepreneurial entities.

SM Prime currently has 25 SM malls strategically located nationwide with a total gross floor area of 3.4 million square meters.

Earlier this year, SM Prime opened SM City Sta. Rosa, SM City Clark, and the SM Mall of Asia. Other malls scheduled to open are SM Supercenter Pasig and SM City Lipa. SM Prime is also expanding SM North Edsa with the construction of Annex 3.

Consolidation of Philex energy projects planned

By Christine A. Gaylican

PHILEX MINING CORP. IS PLANNING TO consolidate all its energy-related projects under subsidiary Brixton Energy and Mining Corp., which will soon list on the exchange, a ranking company official said.

The substantive geological study on Brixton's coal project in Diplahan, Zamboanga Sibugay, showed positive results of high grade coal at 11,000 to 12,000 BTU (British Thermal Unit) that can be used for power generation, Philex Mining Corp. chair and CEO Walter W. Brown said during the company's annual stockholders meeting last Friday.

Brown said the project was adjacent to Philippine National Oil Co. (PNOC)'s Malangas coal project in the province, which now supplies coal to National Power Corp.

Philex's other energy-related activities include a coal operating contract with the Department of Energy.

For petroleum, Philex and Basic Petroleum Inc. have Service Contract (SC) 41 governing the so-called Deepwater South Sulu Sea.

Also, Philex leads a consortium that seeks to reactivate the Cadiao field in Northwest Palawan, which has an estimated deposit of 1 million to 2 million barrels of crude.

"The quality of the crude will likely command a price $2 less than Dubai crude. A number of investors have signified interest in conducting the rehabilitation program for Cadiao, which was estimated to cost $2.5 million to $4 million," Brown said.

He further noted that two foreign companies were now reviewing Cadiao's technical data.

In Philex's Service Contract No. 6A for the Octon Block and Northern Farm-Out Block in Northwest Palawan, a farm-in agreement is being finalized with Vitol GPC Investments S.A.—a company based in the United Kingdom. Philex is part of the consortium developing the Octon field.

"These new projects and our mineral prospects would ensure the viability of the company in years to come," he added.

Cocktales

From page B3

troducing late next month the US-spec Pilot SUV on an indent-basis.

Heard through the grapevine

TAIPAN Lucio Tan is belatedly going into the mall and retail business himself, using a number of foreclosed Uniwide branches and the Ever-Gotesco branch in Ortigas as starting bases.

(Email: cocktales_pdi@pldtdsl.net or cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com)

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& Six Sigma Black Belt Champion & Trainor

Time: 6:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. Venue: Santiago Hall, Mezzanine, Equitable PCI Bank Tower 1, H. V. de la Costa St. corner Makati Ave., Makati City

Breakthrough Service - July 26 (Wed.) Break through existing service mindsets and practices to ensure happier customers. Participate in a large group service simulation that will help you internalize the learning. We will create the "Laws of Breakthrough Service" that if followed, will ensure happier customers, and just as important, a happier you! Converse with Donald Patrick Lim, President & CEO of Yehey.Com, and Melvin Esteban, VP for Segments Marketing of Philamlife.

Breakthrough Productivity - July 27 (Thurs.) Discover the secret to becoming truly productive. You will learn strategies on how to apply that secret into your life to increase the amount of time to do the things you really want and to become the person you really want to be. Converse with Executive Director Rebecca Calzado of the National Wages and Productivity Commission and Kamaneson Ganeson of ECC International.

Breakthrough Innovation - July 28 (Fri.) Learn to become a predictor of change. Gain clarity on the innovation cycle and participate in a number of creativity exercises that you can use on your own or with your team to increase the opportunity to see opportunity. Converse with Ruperto Nicdao, Jr., President of Manila Broadcasting Company, and Dave Valdes, Executive Vice President of Philippine Daily Inquirer.

SUBSIDIZED REGISTRATION FEES PER SESSION: P350 (Balcony), P400 (Orchestra), P450 (Patron) VAT Inclusive. Discounted tickets for teachers, gov't, NGO employees (25%) and students (50%). Only one discount rate applies. Includes certificate of completion and handouts.

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Yehey.Com

Rebecca Calzado
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Nat'l. Wages &
Productivity Comm.

Kamesh Ganeson
Regional Gen. Mgr.
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President
Manila Broadcasting
Company

Dave Valdes
Executive Vice Pres.
Philippine Daily
Inquirer

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Waterfront sets aside ₱250M for renovation

HOTEL OPERATOR WATERFRONT PHILIPpines Inc. said it would spend P250 million this year for the second phase of the hotel group's renovation plan.

Phase two involves the renovation of guest rooms and suites of WPI's four first-class hotels. The company will spend about P100 million for Manila Pavilion Hotel and Casino to renovate about 150 deluxe rooms and suites.

Company officials were optimistic that by the end of the year, all of Manila Pavilion Hotel's guest rooms would be fully renovated in time for its formal re-branding as Waterfront Hotel, WPI said in a statement.

WPI spent P60 million last year to renovate 150 superior rooms at the Manila Pavilion.

For the firm's flagship Cebu City Hotel, WPI intends to invest another P100 million to spruce up 150 superior rooms, executive suites, deluxe rooms and suites. The remaining P50 million will be divided equally between the smaller hotels of the group—one on Mactan Island and the other in Davao City.

This year's renovation activities will be financed with operating funds of the company.

The first phase of WPI's renovation program last year—which cost roughly P200 million—gave the hotels' restaurants and public areas a facelift.

WPI is the country's largest Filipino-owned and -managed first-class hotel chain. It is the only hotel chain in the country that has presence in key cities in the country. It runs the following hotels: Manila Pavilion Hotel and Casino, Waterfront Cebu City Hotel and Casino, the Waterfront Airport Hotel and Casino Mactan, and Waterfront Insular Hotel Davao. The company employs 1,500 employees and has more than 41,000 square meters of convention and gaming space. It houses the country's largest gaming facilities. *Elizabeth L. Sanchez*

Robinsons Land seen raising $220M

Shares offering may be held in Q4

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez and Christine Gaylican

GOKONGWEI

PROPERTY GIANT ROBINSONS LAND CORP. is bent on raising $220 million in fresh capital.

The plan, however, may have to be pushed back a little as the company waits for the regional markets to stabilize, sources said.

RLC was earlier considering the offering of new shares as a way of raising funds in July.

RLC president Lance Gokongwei said the offering might happen this year but this would depend on market conditions.

Sources said RLC might push through with the offering either by the fourth quarter of this year or the first quarter of 2007.

Markets across the region have suffered a beating largely due to jitters over the fate of US interest rates and its ripple effects on the US and Asian economies.

To follow the successful offering of its sister firm Universal Robina Corp., which raised P12 billion from the sale of shares this year, RLC's share offer will consist of up to 932.8 million shares. About 450 million of these shares will come in the form of primary offering.

The price will be computed based on the average trading price of RLC's shares during the 10 days preceding the pricing date of the offer, subject to a discount of up to 10 percent. RLC has tapped UBS Investment Bank to handle the deal.

RLC's shares offering exercise is expected to boost the liquidity of its shares. For its sister firm, URC, the public float was increased to 40 percent from 10 percent.

RLC, whose budget was set at P6 billion this year, is launching two major residential projects in the next two years. These projects will have the Binondo-based Filipino-Chinese communities and overseas Filipino workers as target markets.

The company will start construction next year of Otis 888, its second upscale townhomes cluster project on the four-hectare old Manila Gas property which the company recently acquired from the government.

Otis 888, which is on Otis Road beside UN Avenue in Manila, will consist of 200 townhome units to be built on three hectares of the four-hectare old Manila Gas lot.

RLC is also planning to put up a three- to four-story mall on the remaining one-hectare lot. A call center will take up 10,000 square meters of the mall space, and may cater to 1,500 to 2,000 seats. The mall is slated to be opened in 2007.

Another major residential project in the pipeline will be built on RLC's 9.3-hectare lot in Merville, Parañaque City.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of June 23, 2006)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
FINANCIAL					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	33	33	32	32.5	279,200
Bank of the Phil. Islands	45	47	45	46	1,423,600
China Banking Corp.	860	860	860	860	1,080
Citystate Savings Bank	20.5	20.5	20.5	20.5	300
Export and Ind. Bank A	0.38	0.39	0.38	0.38	1,090,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	72.5	72.5	72	72.5	92,300
International Exch. Bank	41.5	41.5	41.5	41.5	50,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	31	32	31	31	755,200
Philippine National Bank	32	32	32	32	52,500
Phil. Savings Bank	39	39	39	39	5,000
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	17	17	17	17	9,000
Security Bank Corp.	42.5	43	42	42	156,700
Union Bank of the Phil.	42	42.5	42	42.5	15,000
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
Bankard Inc.	0.73	0.85	0.73	0.75	790,000
First Metro Invest. Corp.	31	31	31	31	10,000
Ivantage Corp.	1.26	1.28	1.24	1.24	1,682,000
INDUSTRIAL					
ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
First Gen Corp.	42	42.5	42	42.5	53,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	43.5	44	43.5	44	39,900
Manila Electric Co. A	14	14	14	14	10,100
Manila Electric Co. B	21	21.25	20.75	21	118,200
Manila Water Co. Inc.	7.1	7.3	7.1	7.2	1,488,000
Petron Corp.	3.7	3.75	3.65	3.7	2,637,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.94	0.94	0.94	0.94	10,000
FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.05	3.05	3	3	17,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	23.25	23.25	22.75	22.75	70,600
Jollibee Foods Corp.	31	31.5	31	31	462,500
Pancake House Inc.	4.7	4.8	4.7	4.8	168,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	2.65	2.75	2.65	2.65	273,000
San Miguel Corp. A	64	65	64	65	52,200
San Miguel Corp. B	73	73.5	72.5	73.5	63,300
Phil Tob Flue Cur & Redry	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	6,000
Universal Robina Corp.	18.25	18.25	18	18.25	1,049,500
Vitarich Corp.	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	200,000
CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
Southeast Asian Cement	0.26	0.27	0.26	0.27	1,350,000
Engineering Equip. Inc.	1.3	1.38	1.3	1.34	6,800,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	4.45	4.45	4.45	4.45	79,000
CHEMICALS					
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	50,000
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
Picop Resources Inc.	0.065	0.065	0.06	0.06	5,500,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	340	350	337.5	347.5	145,410
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.56	0.58	0.56	0.58	5,600,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	5.2	5.3	5.2	5.3	1,214,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.024	0.024	0.023	0.023	6,400,000
A. Soriano Corp.	1.84	1.86	1.84	1.84	618,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	27,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.94	1.06	0.94	1.06	7,590,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	9.8	9.8	9.8	9.8	1,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1	1.02	1	1	5,645,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	3.65	3.65	3.6	3.6	193,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	2.7	2.85	2.7	2.85	77,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	5.4	5.5	5.4	5.5	192,000
Pacifica	0.009	0.009	0.009	0.009	2,000,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	500,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.125	0.125	0.12	0.12	4,800,000
SM Investments Corp.	214	215	213	215	23,280
South China Resources Inc.	0.72	0.75	0.72	0.75	410,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	100,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	11	11.25	10.75	11.25	6,714,900
Belle Corp.	1.04	1.06	1.04	1.04	1,354,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	30,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	1.9	1.94	1.88	1.9	1,377,000
C & P Homes Inc	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	120,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	2,100,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.57	0.57	0.57	0.57	4,770,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.03	0.031	0.03	0.031	1,200,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.28	1.3	1.28	1.28	6,433,000
Gotesco Land Inc.	0.0525	0.0525	0.05	0.05	800,000
Highlands Prime Inc.	2.95	3	2.95	3	15,000
Interport Res.	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006	7,000,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.38	1.4	1.38	1.4	5,458,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.21	0.215	0.21	0.215	3,850,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.205	0.21	0.205	0.21	250,000
Primex Corp.	3.65	3.65	3.65	3.65	70,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	10	10	9.9	9.9	11,000
Phil Realty And Holdings	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	400,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	7.3	7.4	7.3	7.4	1,959,000
MEDIA					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	14.25	14.25	14.25	14.25	18,700
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	290,000
TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	1.18	1.22	1.18	1.22	3,173,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	910	910	900	910	88,320
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	3.3	3.45	3.3	3.4	1,264,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1800	1800	1790	1800	24,550
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	200,000
Ionics Inc.	2.24	2.26	2.2	2.2	839,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.0525	0.0525	0.0525	0.0525	1,000,000
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.16	1.16	1.16	1.16	100,000
Transpacific Broadband	1.36	1.36	1.36	1.36	100,000
Philweb Corp.	0.031	0.031	0.03	0.03	199,100,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	13.25	13.25	13	13.25	408,400
HOTEL & LEISURE					
Acesite Phils Hotel Corp.	4.65	4.65	4.65	4.65	190,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.58	0.6	0.58	0.59	9,640,000
EDUCATION					
Far Eastern University	1000	1000	1000	1000	40
iPeople Inc	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	5,000
DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
Macroasia Corp.	2.02	2.02	1.98	1.98	88,000
Paxys Inc	9.9	9.9	9.9	9.9	45,000
MINING					
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.008	0.008	0.008	0.008	22,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	7	7.9	6.8	7.8	6,220,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.29	0.29	0.28	0.29	1,160,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.32	0.34	0.32	0.34	440,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.021	0.022	0.021	0.022	123,200,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.023	0.024	0.023	0.024	65,900,000
Omico Corp.	0.008	0.008	0.008	0.008	142,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	3.95	3.95	3.85	3.9	7,633,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	3.8	4	3.8	3.9	7,576,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	30	30	29	29.5	213,200
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.35	0.39	0.35	0.39	1,110,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.55	0.57	0.54	0.57	760,000
OIL					
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	900,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.009	0.009	0.009	0.009	33,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0095	0.0095	0.0095	0.0095	39,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	1.14	1.26	1.14	1.26	6,089,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	1.14	1.28	1.14	1.26	2,019,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	18.25	19	18.25	18.5	613,400
PREFERRED					
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Q	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series R	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,600
PLDT (10% Pref.) Series U	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	900
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Y	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	300
WARRANTS, PHIL. DEPOSIT RECEIPTS, ETC.					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	14	14.25	14	14.25	24,600

CURRENCIES

June 25, 2006 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.794849	1.000000	53.2320
Japan	Yen	0.006844	0.008611	0.4584
United Kingdom	Pound	1.453382	1.828500	97.3347
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.102346	0.128761	6.8542
Switzerland	Franc	0.639614	0.804699	42.8357
Canada	Dollar	0.710765	0.894214	47.6008
Singapore	Dollar	0.497714	0.626174	33.3325
Australia	Dollar	0.584362	0.735186	39.1354
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.109025	2.653364	141.2439
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.211937	0.266638	14.1937
Brunei	Dollar	0.496161	0.624220	33.2285
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000085	0.000107	0.0057
Thailand	Baht	0.020672	0.026008	1.3845
UAE	Dirham	0.216421	0.272279	14.4940
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.258100	66.9712
Argentina	Peso	0.258698	0.325468	17.3253
Brazil	Real	0.355478	0.447227	23.8068
Denmark	Kroner	0.134105	0.168717	8.9811
India	Rupee	0.017283	0.021744	1.1575
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.217469	0.273598	14.5642
Mexico	New Peso	0.069437	0.087359	4.6503
New Zealand	Dollar	0.485256	0.610501	32.4982
Norway	Kroner	0.125670	0.158105	8.4162
Pakistan	Rupee	0.013202	0.016609	0.8841
South Africa	Rand	0.108960	0.137082	7.2971
Korea	Won	0.000832	0.001047	0.0557
Sweden	Kroner	0.108352	0.136318	7.2565
Syria	Pound	0.015312	0.019264	1.0255
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.024382	0.030675	1.6329

G & W clubshares
As of June 26, 2006
SHARES AVAILABLE

CLUB	SELLER	BUYER
Alabang Country Club A/B*	1,100,000/1,150,000*	1,000,000
Alta Vista B/Corp.*	-	Pls. Call/300,000*
Baguio Country Club	-	520,000
Camp John Hay	-	200,000
Canyon Woods	120,000	-
Capitol Hills	60,000	-
Cebu Country Club	Pls. Call	Pls. Call
Celebrity Sports	120,000	-
Club Filipino	100,000	-
Eagleridge A/B*/C**	320,000*/Pls. Call	Pls. Call*
Eastridge A/B*	Pls. Call	-
Evercrest	65,000	-
Fairways & Bluewater	Pls. Call	Pls. Call
Forest Hills A/B*/C**	100,000/170,000*	Pls. Call*
Luisita Golf	Pls. Call	300,000
Manila Golf Corporate	Pls. Call	12,000,000
Manila Golf Individual	Pls. Call	Pls. Call
Manila Polo	Pls. Call	2,700,000
Manila Southwoods A/B*	Pls. Call*	300,000
Makati Sports Club	180,000	160,000
Manila Yacht Club Ind.	200,000	-
Metropolitan Club A/B*	180,000	100,000
Mimosa Ind./C2*/C3**	Pls. Call	Pls. Call/500,000**
Mt. Malarayat A	200,000	-
Orchard A/B*/C**	180,000/Pls. Call*/250,000**	150,000
Punta Fuego	400,000	-
Quezon City Sports Club	160,000	Pls. Call
Riviera Golf A/B*/C**	90,000/150,000*/250,000**	Pls. Call*
Rockwell Leisure Club	Pls. Call	-
Royale Tagaytay CC	80,000	-
Sherwood A/B*/C**	70,000/150,000**	-
Sta. Elena Golf A/B*	1,150,000	1,100,000/1,550,000*
Subic Golf	190,000	-
The Palms Country Club	420,000	-
Tagaytay Country Club	370,000	-
Tagaytay Highlands	650,000	-
Tagaytay Midlands	Pls. Call	500,000
The Country Club	2,000,000	-
Tower Club	150,000	-
Valley Golf	220,000	-
Valle Verde Ind.	100,000	-
Wack Wack Golf	Pls. Call	[illegible]

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as of June 23, 2006

SELLING		BUYING	
ALABANG A	PLS. CALL	BAGUIO COUNTRY CLUB	510K
BAGUIO COUNTRY CLUB	PLS. CALL	CANLUBANG GOLF CLUB	400K
CANLUBANG GOLF CLUB	500K	CAPITOL HILLS	60K
CAPITOL HILLS	60K	CELEBRITY SPORTS	100K
EAGLERIDGE A	150K	CLUB FILIPINO	90K
EAGLERIDGE B	300K	EAGLERIDGE B	PLS. CALL
EAGLERIDGE C	330K	MANILA GOLF CORP.	PLS. CALL
FOREST HILLS B	180K	MANILA GOLF IND.	11.5M
MAKATI SPORTS	180K	MANILA POLO CLUB	PLS. CALL
MANILA GOLF CORP.	12.0M	MANILA SOUTHWOODS B	650K
MANILA GOLF IND.	11.8M	MIMOSA A	200K
MANILA POLO CLUB	3.2M	MIMOSA C	550K
MANILA SOUTHWOODS B	650K	ORCHARD A	150K
MANILA YACHT CLUB	350K	ORCHARD C	330K
ORCHARD B	350K	PUERTO AZUL GOLF B	50K
PUNTA FUEGO	400K	RIVIERA SPORTS CLUB	20K
QUEZON CITY SPORTS	150K	SPA & LODGE	450K
ROYALE TAGAYTAY	70K	STA. ELENA A	1.0M
STA. ELENA B	PLS. CALL	STA. ELENA B	1.5M
TOWER CLUB C	300K	TAGAYTAY MIDLANDS	670K
VALLE VERDE	90K	THE PALMS	400K
WACK WACK	PLS. CALL	WACK WACK	6.2M

PLAYING RIGHTS ALSO AVAILABLE

Please contact AMIE, VIRGIE OR REY
Tel.#s 8186936/ 8186991/ 8186948; Fax # 818-5453
email address: fvrhi@info.com.ph
GF Tuscan Bldg. 114 V.A. Rufino St. Legaspi Village, Makati City

GG&A Club Shares
SEC License Broker # 00131 • As of June 26, 2006

CLUB	SELLER	BUYER
Alabang Country Club "A" (Filipino)	1,100,000	-
Alabang Country Club "B" (Foreigner)	-	1,020,000
Anvaya Cove Beach and Nature Club	Please Call	-
Baguio Country Club	540,000	500,000
Calatagan Golf Club "A"	40,000	
Calatagan Golf Club "B"	70,000	-
Camp John Hay	250,000	220,000
Canlubang	500,000	400,000
Capitol Hills	60,000	-
Cebu Country Club	1,900,000	1,400,000
Celebrity Sports Club	100,000	90,000
Club Filipino	100,000	-
Eagleridge "A"/"B"/"C"	Please Call	-
Forest Hills "A"	100,000	-
Forest Hills "B"	170,000	-
Forest Hills "C"	180,000	-
Makati Sports Club "A"	180,000	-
Makati Sports Club "B"	250,000	-
Manila Golf (Corporate)	-	12,000,000
Manila Golf (Individual)	-	11,500,000
Manila Polo	2,200,000	Please Call
Manila Southwoods "A"	330,000	300,000
Manila Southwoods "B"	690,000	600,000
Manila Yacht Club	300,000	-
Mimosa (Individual)	220,000	160,000
Mimosa (Corporate)	-	550,000
Mt. Malarayat Golf "A"	200,000	
Mt. Malarayat Golf "C"	350,000	-
Orchard Golf Club "A"	180,000	140,000
Orchard Golf Club "B"	350,000	250,000
Orchard Golf Club "C"	400,000	320,000
Quezon City Sports Club	160,000	
Rockwell Club	Please Call	-
Spa & Lodge	650,000	450,000
Sta. Elena "A"	1,200,000	1,100,000
Subic Bay Golf	200,000	-
Tagaytay Country Club	350,000	300,000
Tagaytay Highlands	680,000	600,000
Tagaytay Midlands	640,000	600,000
Valle Verde (Individual)	90,000	-
Valle Verde (Corporate)	200,000	150,000
Valley Golf	200,000	180,000
Wack Wack Golf Club	-	6,200,000

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Drive against NPA part of anti-terror war

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

Honesto C. General

THE DECISION OF THE PRESIDENT TO launch a two-year drive to wipe out at last the 37-year-old insurgency of the communist NPA is long overdue. Those against the order say: a military solution never worked before. Why should it work now?

Times have changed. Today, the greatest threat is no longer communism. It is terror. In 2004, the US tagged the CPP/NPA as a terrorist organization. In fact the CPP/NPA is, by far, the largest and the most widespread terrorist gang operating in the country.

In 1969, Jose Ma. Sison put up the Communist Party of the Philippines along Maoist lines. Mao preached that whoever controlled the countryside would in the end control the whole country, as the cities would fall like over-ripe fruit. Sison organized the New People's Army as the CPP's military arm to grab power in the countryside.

The Maoist strategy worked in China but has miserably failed here. After 37 years, the NPA has not gained control of the countryside. No area is beyond the reach of the Armed Forces. No town is in danger of falling to the communists.

As long as the CPP/NPA is limited to guerrilla warfare, military victory is beyond their reach. In China and Vietnam, the guerrillas finally won when they became strong enough to defeat the government in conventional warfare and storm the presidential palace with their battle tanks. That will never happen here.

Besides, the CPP/NPA has lost its ideological moorings. World communism has collapsed. The USSR, the worker's paradise and the second superpower, went bankrupt. It could no longer feed the population. Coal miners' wages were months in arrears.

The USSR disappeared from the world map. The Baltic States and the satellite countries in Eastern Europe broke away. China has turned capitalist and is now a member of the World Trade Organization. Cuba and North Korea are the only countries left in the communist world.

Here, the local communists (they now call themselves progressives), in their stupid pride, cling to their fantasy of a proletariat paradise. They have splintered into an alphabet soup of front organizations. The list is long, but it is only a list.

At the start, the NPA was touted in the countryside as the protector of the oppressed barrio folk, who were even willing to pay the revolutionary tax to fund the movement.

But the military struggle has failed. The NPA has deteriorated into an extortionist gang, a rural Mafia, terrorizing the very poor they were supposed to protect. The NPA still occasionally raids an isolated Army outpost just to let everyone know they are still around.

But the NPA's main activity now is to extort the revolutionary tax—the communist version of the value-added tax—from the poorest of the poor in the most distant barrios. At the point of an Armalite rifle, everything that moves or grows is taxed 10 percent of market value: rice and corn, vegetables and fruit, livestock and poultry, fresh and salt water fish and shellfish, rattan and lumber, copra and coconuts. The NPA collects 10 percent from sari-sari store sales and salaries of public school teachers. And, if the parish priest will allow it, the NPA will take 10 percent of church collections.

The Armed Forces estimate that the NPA collects P200 million a year. This is an exaggeration, but the correct amount is certainly nothing to sneeze at.

Where does the blood money go? It does not stay in the barrios. There is nothing there to spend it on. The money, except for field operational expenses, end up in Manila to fund the political struggle. Someone told me once that the national treasurer lives in an upscale subdivision in Makati. Why not? He certainly can afford it.

Some of the money surely ends up in Holland to support Jose Ma. Sison and Luis Jalandoni, reputedly the only communists left in all of Europe. But the bulk is spent in the country to finance demonstrations and party-list candidacies of front organizations.

As usual, some meddlesome bishops suggest that peace talks be resumed instead. But you do not negotiate with terrorists. This is the worldwide anti-terrorism policy.

The NPA holds the poor barrio folks in the iron grip of sheer terror that there is no need to display dead bodies hanging from coconut trees.

A successful campaign will stanch the flow of funds to the national treasurer in Makati. Most important, it will liberate the poorest of the poor in the far-flung barrios from the evil clutches of a terrorist gang.

Bancnet spending up to $2M for technology upgrade

By Doris C. Dumlao

AUTOMATED TELLER MACHINE CONsortium Bancnet is investing up to $2 million of its retained earnings to beef up its technology platform in the next two years.

In an interview, Bancnet chair and Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co. director Angelito Villanueva said the country's first ATM consortium—now interconnected with rival networks ExpressNet and Megalink—was moving to upgrade its system to enhance its services.

"We're looking at replacing our system, both hardware and software, because we feel we have already reached the threshold in terms of transactions on a daily basis," Villanueva said.

Although more and more people are becoming aware of the system, he said only 12 million Filipinos, as against a population of more than 80 million, had ATMs. This means innovations have to be introduced to improve services and increase ATM penetration in the country.

Villanueva said Bancnet was a service-oriented consortium and that the profits it retained were being plowed back to the operation for system upgrades.

"The obsolete systems are being discarded, otherwise you can't compete in the market and we won't be able to introduce new channels. It's important that you introduce something new each year," Villanueva said.

"Since 16 years ago, we've asked for advances from our stockholders only once, and those were for the acquisition of POS (point of sales) terminal in 1994. By 1997, we've reimbursed them," he noted.

Bancnet and ExpressLink have agreed to hook up their 6,000 ATMs starting May 25. Before this, the two networks were separately connected with the third network Megalink.

"The effort is consistent with Bancnet's advocacy for a shared network infrastructure built around the principle of resource sharing and economies of scale," Villanueva said.

Bancnet pioneered the first ATM consortium in 1990. In 1995, Bancnet linked up with Megalink while Megalink and ExpressNet subsequently interconnected two or three years later.

But while now interconnected, the banking system does not expect a three-way merger to happen any time soon.

Foreign investors still keen on investing in Clark

Unfazed by lack of law ensuring perks, incentives

By Ronnel W. Domingo

AMERICAN FIRMS AND OTHER FOREIGN investors are pushing through with their plans to put up businesses at the Clark field in Pampanga even if the issue on incentives has yet to be finally resolved, said Clark Development Corp.

CDC president Antonio R. Ng told the INQUIRER that two of at least four ongoing development works in the former military base have American proponents while two others involve British, Singaporean and Kuwaiti investors.

He said the works continue despite the impatience repeatedly expressed by the Joint Foreign Chambers of Commerce and Industry in the Philippines (JFC) over the lack of a new law ensuring tax holidays and other perks for Clark locators.

"We have secured temporary remedies such as a presidential proclamation that puts Clark under the jurisdiction of the Philippine Economic Zone Authority," Ng said, "But the permanent solution still lies in the hands of Congress."

The official said ongoing developments include the Clark Shogee Studios, which is being developed under a $2-million joint venture with CyberCity Teleservices Philippines Inc.

The California-based Shogee Studio launched its local branch—the fourth worldwide after those in Canada and China—which will offer services such as computer-generated imaging visual effects, prop and facade manufacturing and "fully Hollywood-style" studios.

Once fully developed, Shogee Studios—whose technology was used in making global blockbusters like The Lord of the Rings trilogy, Harry Potter series and King Kong—would become a tourist spot like Universal Studios.

Another project on the rise is the expansion unit of US-based call center services firm IntelliRisk Management Corp., which is seen generating 1,500 jobs.

Further, Ng said Peregrine Development International—a group that represents the ruling Al Sabah family in Kuwait—is expected to turn in by September a firm development plan for its proposed P1.3-billion industrial park.

He said the 228-hectare park would be "a self-contained community industrial estate for light manufacturing with support services, park and open spaces."

The project would take three years to complete and is expected to create some 20,000 jobs.

The fourth project, related to CDC subsidiary Clark Polytechnic, involves a flying school for commercial airline pilots.

A partnership between the United Kingdom's International Aviation Group Development Corp. and Singapore's Prescient Systems and Technologies, the P850-million school will have its own flight simulator to train pilots to handle the Airbus 320 aircraft.

Last month, the JFC called on the House of Representatives to pass House Bill No. 4900, which grants tax amnesty to existing investor-locators at the Clark, John Hay, Morong and Poro Point SEZs, which were potentially harmed by the Supreme Court rulings.

The JFC also asked for the passage of HB No. 4901, which amends the Bases Conversion Development Act of 1992, "to rectify the legislative oversight" by providing the same tax incentives that Subic locators enjoy to business establishments at the (four) SEZs.

Last year, the Supreme Court ruled that only the Subic freeport was covered by the provisions of the law, which in effect voided the incentives which investors had been enjoying for the past 13 years.

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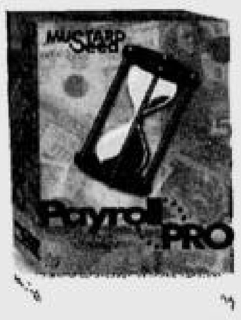

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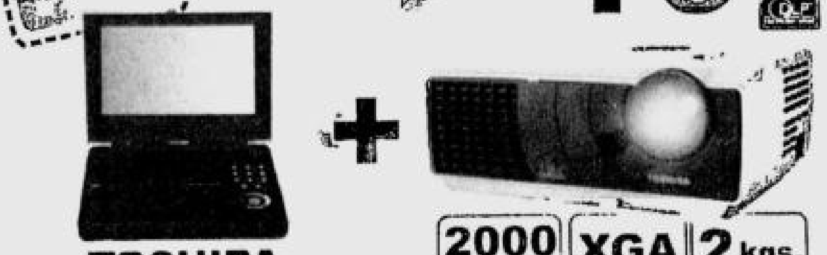

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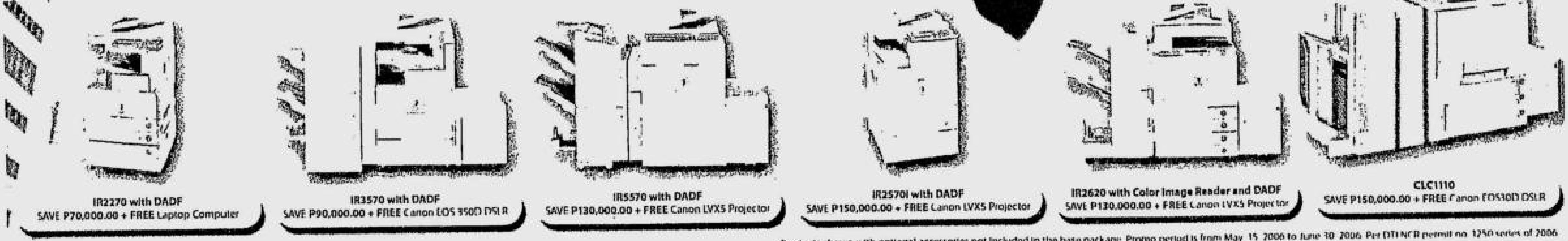

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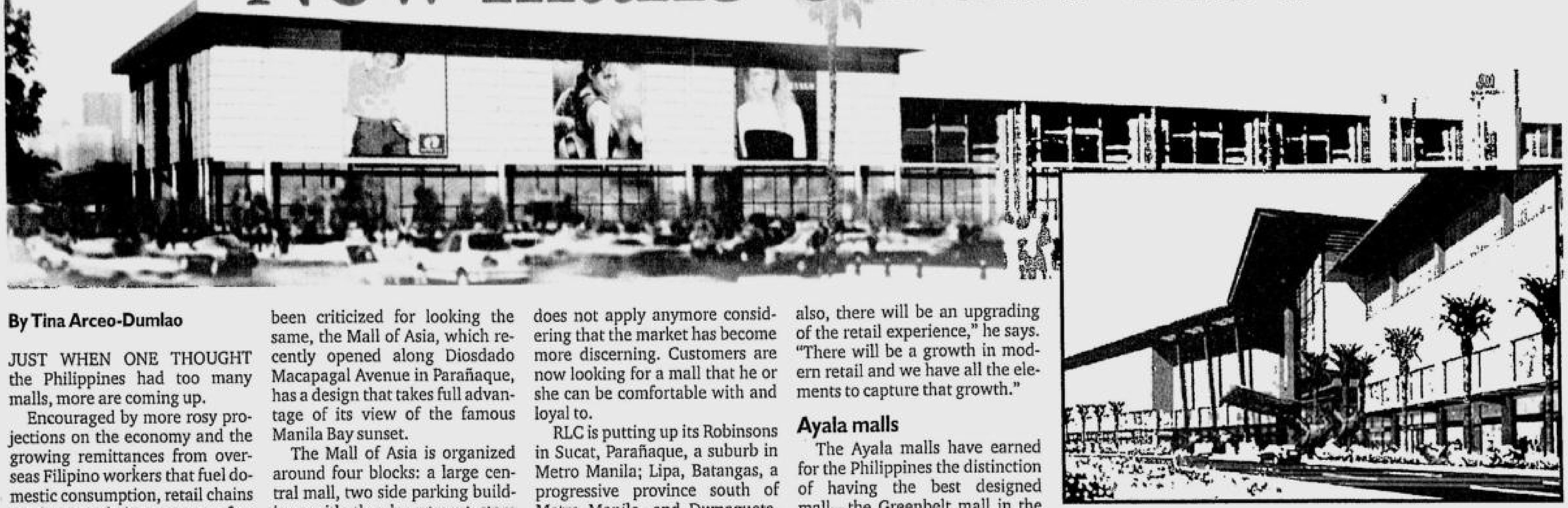
BUSINESS *Monday*

Business Features Editor Margie Quimpo-Espino

New malls on the rise



FACADE of SM City Sta. Rosa; (inset) An architect's perspective of Greenbelt 5

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

JUST WHEN ONE THOUGHT the Philippines had too many malls, more are coming up.

Encouraged by more rosy projections on the economy and the growing remittances from overseas Filipino workers that fuel domestic consumption, retail chains are betting their money on further expansion.

INQUIRER features here some of the leading names in the mall industry and how they plan to compete given the ever stiffening competition for the mall goers' peso.

SM group

The SM group that operates the SM supermalls across the Philippines remains on an aggressive expansion mode.

For this year, the SM group has already opened the SM City Santa Rosa with a gross floor area of 88,000 square meters, SM City Clark, 98,824 square meters, and finally the SM Mall of Asia, arguably the biggest in Southeast Asia with 386,000 square meters.

More will be opened later this year: SM Supercenter Frontera Verde, 28,602 square meters; SM City Lipa, 77,682 square meters and finally, SM City Bacolod, 59,023 square meters.

SM vice president Millie Dizon says the SM group remains optimistic about the prospects in the retail industry because there are areas outside the capital of Metro Manila that are rapidly developing, thus, putting up a mall makes sense.

"Our management believes that if we can serve more people and be of service to as many Filipinos as we can, then we will be OK," Dizon says.

The SM group is, understandably, most excited about its Mall of Asia project, not only because of its size but also because of the design.

While other SM malls have been criticized for looking the same, the Mall of Asia, which recently opened along Diosdado Macapagal Avenue in Parañaque, has a design that takes full advantage of its view of the famous Manila Bay sunset.

The Mall of Asia is organized around four blocks: a large central mall, two side parking buildings with the department store and a hypermarket and the entertainment block facing the bay.

It boasts of an IMax theater, the first in the Philippines, an Olympic-size ice skating rink and 800 shops.

Though some analysts have raised their concerns on the viability of such a large mall, Dizon says the group was unperturbed, rather, remains steadfast in its belief that it will succeed, just like the others.

"We have our track record and our experience," she says. "We have always beaten the odds."

Robinsons

Robinsons Land Corp., part of the Gokongwei group of companies and owner of the Robinsons malls, does not take a cookie cutter approach to putting up malls.

This means that one mall is not build to look just like the other, because it believes that each mall should be designed and built around what the community and the market require.

Cornelio S. Mapa Jr., general manager of the commercial centers division of RLC, explains further that by having the flexibility to "play" with the size and design of the mall, Robinsons becomes an intrinsic part of the community around it.

Robinsons counts on its tenant mix as one of its competitive advantage.

"There used to be a time when people just build malls, fill it up with goods and then expect market to just come," Mapa says.

He says that kind of thinking does not apply anymore considering that the market has become more discerning. Customers are now looking for a mall that he or she can be comfortable with and loyal to.

RLC is putting up its Robinsons in Sucat, Parañaque, a suburb in Metro Manila; Lipa, Batangas, a progressive province south of Metro Manila, and Dumaguete, Oriental Negros, a province in the Visayas region, in central Philippines.

"These won't be your regular malls," Mapa says but declined to give details.

The construction of the new malls will go hand in hand with the redevelopment of existing properties as part of the group's thrust to continue reinventing itself.

The Robinsons Place in Ermita, on the other hand, will bring in more of the food outlets in Manila to bring in that bohemian feel and energy that make Malate, an old district in Manila, such a destination.

Mapa says the group can afford to continue expanding because it believes that the local retail industry will continue to prosper.

"The economy is growing and also, there will be an upgrading of the retail experience," he says. "There will be a growth in modern retail and we have all the elements to capture that growth."

THE ARANETA group will expand its Gateway Mall, encouraged by the mall's performing beyond expectations.

Ayala malls

The Ayala malls have earned for the Philippines the distinction of having the best designed mall—the Greenbelt mall in the Makati central business district.

Projects in the pipeline include the retail portion of the Ayala group's Serendra real estate development in the Fort Bonifacio Global City with 6,000 square meters of retail space.

Rowena Tomeldan of the Commercial Centers Group of Ayala Land Inc. says that because the retail space here is small, it will have carefully selected tenants to give consumers a reason to go there.

"It will be a feast for the senses," Tomeldan says of the project which will be in operation by the first quarter of next year.

Then there's the bigger retail area of the Bonifacio Global City itself with 14,000 square meters, which will be anchored by a 40-meter wide and 400-meter long activity park for events, fairs and other activities.

And the bigger Triangle North of Manila project in Quezon City where the Light Rail Transit III line ends, with 200,000 square meters.

Tomeldan describes Trinoma, which should be in place by July next year, as a super regional mall which will bring in the best of retail and entertainment in the Ayala malls to the Quezon City market.

She believes the Quezon City market is underserved and deserves another mall in the area.

Trinoma will also take advantage of its being in a major transport hub.

Another exciting development for the Ayala malls is Greenbelt 5.

"We really thought out of the box for this development and we decided to take advantage of the proximity to the Greenbelt park," Tomeldan says.

She says the group is also especially proud of the section in Greenbelt 5 that will be dedicated to world-class Filipino artists, be it in food or in products.

The completion of Greenbelt 5, the first phase in October next year and the second phase in the first quarter of 2008, will complete the redevelopment of the Greenbelt area.

Completing the list of the Ayala group's major mall development projects is the redevelopment of the Ayala Center in Cebu, the major urban center outside Metro Manila.

Araneta group

The Araneta group has long been content to just maintain its operations within Araneta Center in Cubao, Quezon City as they are.

Thus, not everyone was convinced that the group will truly fulfill its promise to redevelop the Araneta Center, and in grand style at that.

But the successful opening of the high-end Gateway Mall in October 2004 proved critics wrong.

It has become a destination mall in Quezon City, and Araneta seeks to duplicate its success with the expansion of the Gateway Mall.

"There is that realization that Quezon City is a community with purchasing power," says Araneta group vice president Grace Magno.

Magno says the Araneta group has the additional advantage of being at major crossroads and in a transportation hub.

Aside from expanding the Gateway Mall, there are also plans to improve on where the Rustan's superstore is; the construction of an information technology park and putting up a number of buildings in partnership with Megaworld group.

These programs are part of the multibillion redevelopment of Araneta Center, which started with the refurbishment of the Araneta Coliseum, improvement of the Ali Mall, the country's first air-conditioned mall, the new Farmer's Plaza and then the Gateway mall.

Advance medical training center in Singapore opens

PHILIPS MEDICAL SYSTEMS (Philips), a division of Royal Philips Electronics, has set up a 12-million euro (P800 million) learning center for advanced medical diagnostics equipment training in Singapore.

The new 37,000 sq ft Singapore Learning Centre offers training programs designed around the needs of healthcare technicians and is the largest dedicated facility of its kind for advance medical equipment training in Asia Pacific.

The center caters to the needs of the Asia Pacific, Australasia and the Middle East regions and allows them access to a facility providing education and training in the skills and expertise required to operate technologically advanced high-performance diagnostics equipment. The center will also provide medical communities across the region access to the most advance medical diagnostics equipment and their operation, thus accelerating the delivery of quality healthcare.

"Healthcare is much more than just another large industry or business. It is ultimately about providing patients access to affordable and available care of good quality, in the developed and the developing world. The opening of the Singapore Learning Centre reinforces our commitment to advancing healthcare in Asia Pacific, a region which is a key growth engine for the medical business and where we are benefiting from double-digit growth rates over the past couple of years," stated Jouko Karvinen, CEO of Philips Medical Systems.

"As one of the world's leading healthcare companies, Philips is at the forefront of developing technologies that best cater to the needs of Asia Pacific's population. We believe that future healthcare solutions and practices need to connect and empower societies, care providers and consumers to advance the quality of life and create additional value. Philips is uniquely positioned to provide solutions throughout the care cycle; we are there to help with prevention, with early detection, with diagnosis, with treatment and with distance care," said Karvinen.

"Philips has come a long way in healthcare over the last 10 years. In 1998, Philips Medical Systems only accounted for 6 percent of the group's turnover; now it is over 20 percent. All our healthcare activities are inspired by the same vision: remove barriers to best possible care. We want to help build a world where access to healthcare in universal; where a person can be healed before falling ill; where a patient can be 'seen' without leaving his home; where urgent medical decisions can be made instantly, because relevant information is readily available," added Karvinen.

Philips is one of the top three global medical systems providers, and ranked No. 1 in patient monitoring and No. 2 in medical diagnostic imaging globally. Philips' offerings in healthcare require investments that have an immediate payback in better and less expensive care.

Educating future farmers

(Second of two parts)

MAPPING THE FUTURE

Dr. Jose Rene C. Gayo

AFTER FINISHING HIGH school, students can now choose to have a career as farm business entrepreneurs.

Plans are now underway to provide these high school graduates the opportunity to finish college with a Bachelor of Science in Entrepreneurship degree major in Farm Business.

College-level agriculture programs have been around in the country for close to a century, yet there has been very little success if we look at our small farmers.

Today, agriculture is one of the last courses a farmer would like his son to take (if at all he gets a chance to go to college) because, as they say, "there is no money in farming." This fact is reflected in the number of students enrolled in agriculture courses over the past 20 years.

Agriculture's share of the whole student population has been declining and will continue to do so. As a result, agriculture schools in the country are seen joining the list of endangered species, if nothing is done to reverse the trend.

How do we arrest these problems? What is needed is a new "twist," a new way of doing things.

A school dedicated and focused on training farm-based entrepreneurs—a Farm Business School (FBS)—is badly needed.

A business program is still very attractive today as it has been since 30 years ago. The degree that will be offered leads to a BS Entrepreneurship major in Farm Business. It will be offered as a ladderized program that can award a diploma after three years (under Tesda) and a bachelor's degree after an additional year (under CHEd).

Why a ladderized program? The first three years will make use of the Dual Training System because the curriculum is biased toward intensive hands-on training. Students will go through a work-study program. The work component will be done in school through the various farm enterprises that will be set up to serve as "live" projects for students to learn the ABCs of running a farm business.

After three years, only select students will be invited to go through the fourth year to earn their bachelor's degree.

The farm business enterprises that will be set up to serve as practicum venues for students will also help many schools generate their own revenues.

Some of the faculty members of the FBS will be designated managers of the various farm enterprises that will be operated as "strategic business units". They can also share in the profit, providing them a source of extra income.

How will this program be implemented? In some universities and state colleges, they have separate colleges for agriculture and business or commerce.

An FBS can be set up as an extension program to be run jointly by the College of Agriculture and the College of Business. The other possibility is for the College of Business to award the degree, but the program will be run jointly with the College of Agriculture (providing the technical subjects).

This is to affirm what was said earlier that the program is not an agriculture course but a business course.

What about the capital for the various farm enterprises? Through the Management Association of the Philippines (AgriBusiness committee) a venture capital fund will be put up.

Participating schools of the FBS program will submit project proposals for equity participation via the venture capital fund. Only those projects with promise of success will be funded on a strictly business agreement.

What about capital for students' projects as part of the requirement of the program? Participating schools with the help of MAP AgriBusiness committee will also set up their own financing program whereby students may avail themselves of a loan to start his/her own farm business enterprise.

Such financial program may continue if the student would like to pursue the farm business after graduation.

One may ask, what are the chances of success of this program given that it is something new? It may sound new but the key elements of the program design have been drawn from two successful "experiments": (1) the Dual Training System that is now institutionalized in the Philippines and has been successfully adopted by some schools and (2) University of Asia & the Pacific's BS Entrepreneurial Management.

Conclusion

Agriculture still promises to be an important sector in the economy that contributes to the country's search for development. Specifically, it promises to be the key to freeing millions of Filipinos from the bondage of poverty.

They are those who still consider farming their main source of livelihood.

They only need the right training and education to make their farms family business enterprises. The proposed farm business school may just be what they are waiting for.

(The article reflects the personal opinion of the author and does not reflect the official stand of the Management Association of the Philippines. The author is the project manager of MAP's Farm Business Schools Program under the agribusiness committee. He was the founding dean (1996-2004) of the University of Asia and the Pacific School of Management. Presently, he is the executive director of PAREF Sounthridge School in Alabang and trustee of the Meralco Foundation. Feedback at mapsec@globenet.com.ph)

Disclosures

Corporate Securities Info
Raul J. Palabrica

IF SOME BUSINESS EXECUTIVES CAN HAVE their way, they will keep unfavorable reports about their operation within the confines of their offices.

Good image is a must for companies that depend on public confidence for their survival in the market.

Unlike in the tinsel world where all kinds of publicity are welcome, a single piece of bad news about a business can lead to serious financial losses or, worse, its collapse.

While many companies may get away with putting a lid on unpleasant reports about them, there are some businesses that have no choice but be candid with the public about their true state.

The Securities Regulation Code requires the following companies to "come clean" to their stockholders and the people they do business with:

- Issuers of registered securities;
- Those whose stocks are traded in the stock exchange; and
- Public companies (or those with assets worth at least P50 million and have 200 or more stockholders who each hold a minimum of 100 shares).

Material

These companies have to give a full, fair and accurate report to the public of material facts or events that arise within their midst that could reasonably influence the action of their investors.

When something out of the ordinary happens or is expected to happen in these companies, their top brass have to sit back and examine the possible impact of that event to their shareholders.

Will the event make their investors take a second look at their investment and decide whether or not it makes good business sense to maintain it?

Or is the event something that the investors would consider as "no big deal" and therefore not worth further attention on their part?

If there is reason to believe that the investors would be interested on the possible effects to them of that event, then the company has to make the appropriate disclosure.

Examples of these incidents are the resignation or removal of key management officials, significant net worth losses, delay in the payment of obligations, and fines of more than P50,000 imposed by regulatory authorities.

Time frames

To assist the affected companies on this matter, the Securities and Exchange Commission, through SEC Form 17-C, has enumerated 30 events (which are not all inclusive) that could trigger the disclosure process.

At the outset, information about the material event should be made public through the news media.

Receipt by the media office of the press release constitutes sufficient compliance with this requirement.

It's up to the media outlet to decide whether the information given to it is newsworthy to merit publication or airing on TV or radio.

If the company is listed on the stock exchange, the disclosure has to be submitted to the exchange within 10 minutes from the event's occurrence and prior to the media release.

A copy of that report should, at the same time, be given to the SEC.

On the basis of that report, the exchange can either continue trading the corporation's securities or suspend trading to give the market participants an opportunity to evaluate the effects of the event on the stocks.

In case the corporation is not traded on the exchange, the event should be reported to the SEC by way of Form 17-C within five days from the happening of the event, unless a similar report has earlier been submitted to the SEC through other means.

Media scoop

Considering the resourcefulness of our news reporters, it is possible that they may get wind of the material event and, before the affected corporation is able (deliberately or otherwise) to make the required reports, make it public.

Under those circumstances, the corporation should get in touch immediately with the media outlet concerned to either deny the report if it is not true, or make the proper clarification in case it is misleading or had left out important details.

The prompt response is necessary to avoid public speculation on the possible adverse effects of the subject event.

In the instances when the media scoop involves a listed company, the stock exchange, instead of waiting for the submission of a disclosure, simply calls or send a letter by facsimile to the corporation to get its reaction to the report.

And even if a company has responded to the news report, it is still obliged to file the proper reports to the stock exchange, where applicable, and to the SEC within the time frames earlier mentioned.

The disclosure must be signed by a responsible executive officer of the corporation.

Any misleading statement, misrepresentation or omission of material fact in the report submitted could give rise to administrative sanctions on the corporation and whoever signed it on its behalf. *(For feedback, e-mail to rpalabrica@inquirer.com.ph)*

Small-town boy now big-time partner

AT 35, FRANCIS ALBALATE IS MORE than used to friendly jibes about how he's too young to be where he is now. During a recent interview on corporate social responsibility, one reporter, after being introduced to Albalate, candidly commented that he looked too young to be a partner at one of the country's largest accounting firms. Since he had become adept at handling such knee-jerk assessments, Albalate promptly countered that looks can be very deceiving.

If the San Beda alumnus looks like he does not fit the part, it could be credited to the fact that he didn't waste any time getting his career off the ground. Even before passing the CPA boards in 1991, Albalate had already found his nesting ground at Punongbayan & Araullo (P&A).

Then a fledgling accounting and tax advisory firm, P&A gave Albalate the room and the opportunities to establish himself in an industry that has long been regarded as the province of the "elder statesmen."

Albalate started out as an audit junior at P&A and quickly made an impression with the firm's more seasoned partners. After only four years, he had built a solid enough track record to qualify for the firm-sponsored MBA program at the Asian Institute of Management (AIM). But Albalate had other things in mind.

"I was only 25 at the time, and I really wanted to be sent on the exchange program to the US rather than stay here and get an MBA," he admits. But P&A's CEO Ben Punongbayan stepped in and convinced Albalate that staying home was the better option, stressing that an MBA was what he needed in order to grow with the firm.

True enough, in 2003, a few years after he completed his MBA program, Albalate was admitted as partner, the youngest ever to have been admitted to the P&A partnership. "At that time, I wasn't really thinking of being a partner," he shares. "I was just a boy from the province and I was thinking that after graduation, I would go back to Bicol and live a simple life as a simple employee."

ALBALATE

That plan has taken on a whole new form: Last year, Albalate finally got the opportunity to see the world and be one step closer to fulfilling a personal dream that has everything to do with his favorite sport—tennis.

As a member firm of Grant Thornton International, P&A was invited to send one of its partners to the International Partners Development Program (IPDP), Grant Thornton's own mini-MBA program that allows participants to share best practice methods and network around the world. This time, it was Albalate's turn, and his IPDP experience took him to Belgium, the US and, most importantly, the UK.

"I was in London the day the bombings occurred," recalls Albalate, "and the only thing that saved me from that tragedy was fatigue from being such a tourist the day before." He was also in the city when one of the best games in women's tennis was played out in the center court of Wimbledon.

"I was able to watch Maria Sharapova and Venus Williams in the semifinals, and I was sending text messages to everyone I knew to watch the game on TV because they might actually see me. I was right in front of Sharapova," he beams.

Although his Russian bet lost the game, Albalate still considers it one of his wins, as he is now two tournaments closer to watching all four Grand Slam tennis tournaments (he has already watched a game in the 2000 US Open).

Although Albalate is thoroughly enjoying the perks of partnership, the work and responsibility that come with it are not lost on him.

"Work in an auditing firm is not for the fainthearted, especially since we are busiest during the more important holidays," says Albalate, who has gotten used to busy seasons that start around Christmas time and stretch on to Holy Week the following year.

In addition to his already heavy workload managing a team of public accountants, Albalate is also overseeing other aspects of P&A's practice. He regularly speaks before accounting students to represent the firm and the practice of accounting; he keeps his tech skills sharp by managing the firm's website; and he is the partner in charge of P&A for a Cause, or PAUSE, the firm's corporate social responsibility arm. "I work really hard to prove that I deserve partnership at a very young age," he says. Judging by Albalate's portfolio of engagements and the respect of his peers and staff, there is no doubt that he has earned his place in the boardroom.

Little Things
for the Philippines
CHILDREN'S HOUR BENEFICIARIES
5,581,000.00

THE MANAGEMENT Association of the Philippines, led by its president Evelyn R. Singson (2nd from right), turns over a P5.58 million check to Children's Hour Philippines Inc. chair Bienvenido A. Tan (left), to help support the Children Hour's fund. Also in photo are Benjamin Abadiano, Esperanza Cabral and Ramon del Rosario.

Net helps agency find jobs for Filipinos

FILIPINOS CONTINUE TO VENTURE overseas for work.

Deltavir Overseas Job Placement and General Services Inc. is a manpower placement agency accredited by the Philippine Overseas Employment Agency (POEA) that supplies Filipino workers to multinational companies abroad.

Deltavir offers applicants access to various jobs in telecommunications with partner companies in the Middle East and Europe.

Deltavir deploys an average of 2,000 workers a year. To help facilitate the demand for Filipino manpower, Deltavir has made the Internet an extension of its business with PLDT BizDSL.

According to Mario M. Almazora, president and general manager of Deltavir Overseas Job Placement, their BizDSL Internet connection proves useful in conducting video-camera interviews for their applicants. They schedule an appointment with their client abroad, then they set up their webcam with an instant messenger. At the appointed date and time, both the applicant and the foreign employer go online and talk face to face in real time under Deltavir's supervision.

"We have transactions finalized through video cam. They just tell me if the applicant is acceptable. If he is, then we get him ready for deployment," Almazora said .

"We often check the website of our clients to know more about them. We also get inquiries from our website. Clients check our website to see what we can deliver."

Their website powered by BizDSL also proves very useful to applicants who visit to check the jobs available, accomplish their online application form and email their resume. Deltavir Overseas Job Placement's move to go online realizes Almazora's vision of a paperless operation.

"We used to spend a fortune sending resumes abroad by express courier. But now, we simply email them to our clients. Transacting online is very efficient, cheaper and cleaner. It serves the agency, the candidates and the client."

Enterprises like Deltavir Overseas Job Placement can power up their business for as low as P3,000 monthly with Smallbiz Micro at up to 1.7 Mbps and Smallbiz Lite at up to 2 Mbps for only P4,000. For businesses that run bandwidth-hungry applications, PLDT myDSL biz offers speeds of up to 2.7 Mbps.

For business applications of PLDT, call 171, or log on to www.mypad.net

Leadership lessons from Lewis and Clark - I

A LEADER'S WAY

John C. Maxwell

BEFORE BEGINNING, I'D LIKE TO thank my friend Ed Rowell. His research and thoughts played a major role in this study.

On May 21, 2004, Americans celebrated the beginning of perhaps the most amazing journey in American history. Two hundred years prior, Captains Meriwether Lewis and William Clark left St. Louis, Missouri at 3:30 in the afternoon heading upstream on the Missouri River.

Their expedition, dubbed the Corps of Discovery, had been commissioned by President Thomas Jefferson to find the mythical "Northwest Passage," an all-water trade route across the continent to the Pacific Ocean that explorers had searched for almost 300 years.

At stake was the fur trade, the continent's most easy exploitable natural resource.

Lewis and Clark had never seen the Pacific Ocean, nor did they have an accurate sense of how far west the continent stretched. Once they were a few days west of St. Louis, their opportunities for communication with home were nonexistent.

When they returned to St. Louis down the same river, they'd covered more than 8,000 miles and been gone for 28 months. Long feared dead, they came home as national heroes. Even today, their journey overland across the continent is among the most courageous journeys ever conceived and attempted.

Along the way, they were to develop an accurate map of the Missouri River basin, record all available information about natural history and geology, and report on and begin building relationships with native tribes they encountered.

They discovered 120 new species of animals and 178 new species of plants. They were the first Europeans to cross the Continental Divide. They were the first to see herds of buffalo, numbering in the thousands, grazing on the largest grassland in the world, and they were the first white men that most of the tribes they met had ever seen.

One of the most remarkable accomplishments is that in spite of the brutal grind of moving people, boats and tons of gear upstream, serious accidents, life-threatening weather, and less than peaceful contact with some of the continent's earliest residents, the Corps of Discovery experienced just one casualty.

It was a grand journey that still inspires and awes after 200 years. But there are no great journeys without great leadership. And the journey across the American Continent is a case study in leading where no one has gone before.

Without trust, the journey is over before it begins.

When asked to lead the expedition, Meriwether Lewis immediately contacted a man that he had served under in the army, William Clark. Lewis was a self-aware man, and he recognized that Clark's strengths would counter each of his own weaknesses.

Four years older, Clark had a strong leadership resumé, having served as a company commander. He was a popular, tough, and a fearless woodsman. Clark had been raised in Kentucky, was an accomplished river explorer who was usually with the fleet. Lewis, on the other hand, was of Virginia aristocracy, having lived much of his life among the educated, successful gentry of the day.

Lewis loved to walk and was often out front, days ahead, scouting out the route. And when it came time to buy horses to get across the mountains, he knew a good animal when he saw it. Lewis was the camp doctor, Clark the camp counselor.

Most importantly, Clark offered a stability that Lewis was unable to give. Lewis suffered, as his father had, from a "melancholic spirit," or "depressions of the mind." Most modern scholars look at the evidence and believe that he was bi-polar, or manic-depressive. The journey gave him reason to shove back the darkness, and his ability to keep going is a testimony to his sheer strength and will.

Lewis' offer to Clark was to be an equal leader in every conceivable way, including rank and pay. Because the army bureaucracy refused to recognize a co-commander, Clark did not receive his promised captain's commission.

The two leaders never mentioned it to the men, and for the next seven years, only Lewis, Clark and Jefferson, and a clerk or two at the War Department knew the truth. When asked as an old man to describe their relationship, Clark replied, "Equal in every point of view."

"Most of all, Lewis knew that Clark was competent to the task, that his word was his bond, and that his back was steel. And Clark knew the same about Lewis. Their trust in each other was complete, even before they took the first step west together. How this closeness came about cannot be known in any detail, but that it clearly was a long time before the expedition—that cannot be doubted."

Our true self-awareness forces us to place trust in others.

Lewis knew his limitations, and he sought a leader with abilities to complement his strengths and weaknesses. In selecting Clark, Lewis showed maturity in realizing he could not lead the way alone. In allowing Clark equal rank and an equal share of the credit, Lewis demonstrated remarkable security.

Competence is essential if trust is to be continued.

Lewis and Clark had differing skills, but each was a greatly talented man. From their diaries, it is obvious that as the journey progressed, their trust in each other deepened. They had a sense of great security because of the mutual confidence they placed in each other. Trust is not unfounded. Trust must be built upon competence.

Trust is strengthened when trust is proven.

The two officers would have one opportunity after another in which they literally put their lives into the hands of others on the expedition. Surmounting each challenge, their trust increased as they proved their merit.

The highest level of trust is expressed in obedience and submission, even when there is a lack of understanding or agreement.

At one point on the journey, the explorers came to two rivers and had to decide which one was the Missouri River. Lewis and Clark's choice went against the general consensus of their men. Even while disagreeing, the men were willing to trust the judgment of their leadership. The submission of the team at such a critical juncture demonstrates their absolute faith in their leaders.

The reward of trust is an intimate relationship that few ever experience.

There is an intimacy when proven by time and experience and competence, that only people that have gone through that trusting experience ever realize. The attitude of the men displayed their intimacy: "they would triumph together or they would die together."

(For information on John Maxwell's in-house or public leadership or teamwork workshops, please email us at maxwell@inspire.ph or call 813-2732/03)

Honda places bets on small sedans

By Ronnel W. Domingo

HONDA CARS PHILIPPINES Inc. is out to tighten its grip on the small sedan market as it expects the industry to prefer vehicles that provide more mileage.

HCPI president and general manager Takashi Sekuguchi said in an interview the company expected sales of its small cars to improve this year amid growing concerns for fuel efficiency.

Last Friday, Honda launched the 2006 Honda Jazz aimed at the young and first-time car buyers. It comes in 1.3-liter and 1.5-liter variants.

First introduced in Japan as the Honda Fit, the new model had won awards such as the "Japan Car of the Year in 2001-2002" and "Best Selling Car in 2002" in Japan, as well as "Car of the Year" from the United Kingdom's Auto Express Magazine.

The Jazz/Fit model is currently sold in at least 60 countries, including those in Europe and South America and in Australia and Thailand.

Sekiguchi said the hatchback accounted for about 18 percent of Honda's total sales, which reached 9,797 units in 2005.

The official said Honda was confident it could maintain last year's sales levels and was hopeful that it would increase due to rising fuel prices.

Seikuguchi added that the Civic sedan remained the company's bestseller as it accounted for 17 percent of industry sales last year.

The Civic also represented a quarter of Honda's overall sales in 2005, he said.

The Honda chief said the firm was on track with its target of achieving a 20-percent overall sales growth rate this year considering that it has sold a total of 5,016 units to date.

"We are working to make 2006 our turnaround year after last year's 7-percent decrease in sales from 10,550 units," he said.

Further, Sekiguchi said Honda planned to introduce to the local market a full-sized sport utility vehicle that would be shipped in completely built from the United States where the SUV is exclusively made.

Japan gov't seen providing new ODA funds to RP despite woes

Mission here for 3 weeks to check country's financial needs

By Michelle V. Remo

THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT HAS SENT A mission to the Philippines to check its funding needs, signaling that it would likely provide additional official development assistance funds despite past disagreements.

The mission is composed of representatives from Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC), the Philippines' biggest source of ODA funds.

Finance Undersecretary Roberto Tan said in a briefing that the Japanese mission arrived a few days ago for a two to three-week discussion with various government agencies.

He said the Japanese were interested to know the reform programs and developmental projects that the agencies intended to pursue, which still lacked funds.

If JBIC's ODA program would continue this year, it would be the Japanese government's 27th yen loan package for the Philippines.

Tan said JBIC had not yet committed any amount, but was looking at projects in line with environmental and infrastructure development.

Last year, for the 26th yen loan package, JBIC allotted 13.401 billion yen (P5.896 billion) for various projects in the Philippines.

TAN

The projects included the Social Fund for Peace and Development of the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), Central Mindanao Road Project, Arterial Road Bypass project, and the Subic Bay Freeport Environment Management Project.

There had been concerns that the Japanese government would no longer lend to the Philippines following problems encountered by Japanese contractors in claiming tax refunds from the Philippine government.

The Japanese contractors were tapped to service infrastructure projects funded by ODA funds from the Japanese government.

The refund claims were value-added taxes paid by the contractors.

Under the agreement between the Philippine and Japanese governments, Japanese contractors servicing ODA projects funded by JBIC should be entitled to refunds of their VAT payments.

But Tan said the Philippine government had already settled the bulk of the amount, which runs in the hundreds of million pesos.

He estimated that remaining claims amounted to less than P50 million.

Aside from difficulties in claiming refunds, the Japanese government also expressed concerns over the delays in the implementation of several ODA-funded projects because of the lack of counterpart funding from the Philippine government.

ODA-funded projects are not entirely financed by foreign loans, and require some financing by the government.

But Tan said that reforms were already made to ensure that only projects that the Philippine government can afford would be approved for ODA financing.

"They (Japanese government) would like to move forward in developing the loan package, and we (Philippine government) now have a budget space for that," Tan said.

US commits ₱1-B support to agriculture

DAVAO CITY—THE UNITED STATES WOULD release $20 million (about P1 billion) in financial assistance over the the next two years to support the country's agriculture and fishery sectors, Ambassador Kristie Kenney said last Thursday.

Kenney visited the city to grace the conference of the Cold Chain Association of the Philippines held at the Marco Polo Hotel here.

CCAP has been assisted by the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) and it plans to put up cold storage facilities to boost the island's agriculture and fishery sectors.

Kenney said the money for the agriculture and fishery assistance program was already available.

She said discussions between US and the Philippine government were now being held so that specific mechanisms on the use of the fund could be put in place.

"The project will be realized in a few months," Kenney said.

Kenney said the fund was only one of the many efforts of the US government to help the Philippines attain food security.

She said that to date, the US government, through the USDA, has already poured in more than $2 million (P106 million) in grants and assistance for programs that have improved food product trade between the two countries.

"The assistance led to the economic growth and development of the private sector," Kenney said.

As this developed, Kenney also announced the release of a grant worth at least P9.5 million to help the Visayan Forum Foundation, a group involved in the campaign against human trafficking.

She said the fund will be used for the operation of VFF halfway houses in the cities of Davao, Manila, Batangas, and Sorsogon. The halfway houses provide protection to human trafficking victims.

Kenney said the US government will continue its partnership with VFF in protecting victims of human trafficking. *Judy Quiros, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

MONEY IN VEGETABLES. Monera Baclid, of Matalam, North Cotabato, harvests organically-grown, "chemical-free" eggplants from a farm tended by her group of former Moro National Liberation Front woman-members. Established in June 2005, the farm has been providing a lucrative income, not only from eggplants, but also from tomatoes, bitter gourds, sweet peppers, string beans and pechay. The group has learned modern vegetable farming technologies from the USAID's Growth with Equity in Mindanao (GEM) program through its Targeted Commodity Expansion Program (TCEP), which trains former MNLF combatants to engage in the production of vegetables, and other high-value crops, *cardaba* banana, tilapia, *lapu-lapu* (grouper), and prawns. TCEP also links them with institutional buyers of their produce.

Vegetable growers' sales to grow by ₱6B, industry group estimates

DAVAO CITY—VEGETABLE GROWERS in Mindanao are expected to post at least P6 billion in sales over the next few years with the construction of cold storage facilities in Mindanao.

Anthony Dizon, president of the Cold Chain Association of the Philippines (CCAP), said the sales projection was based on the production of 200 million kilos of vegetables per harvest, which can be sold at an average of P30 a kilo.

He said that with the new storage facilities, the quality and value of food and other perishable products from Mindanao would be preserved.

Because the shelf life of the vegetables would be prolonged, losses to producers would be minimized, he said.

Dizon said CCAP would invest P600 million in the construction of cold storage facilities in the cities of Davao, General Santos and Cagayan de Oro.

"The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has committed to conduct a feasibility study on the project at its own expense," Dizon told reporters on the sidelines of the recently concluded 4th conference of the CCAP here.

He said CCAP's project got the support of the USDA "because the USDA has a soft spot for Mindanao as a potential agricultural area."

Dizon said that based on the timetable, the proposed cold chain facilities could be completed in the next 12 months.

CCAP members said they recognized the need to expand and improve cold chain facilities in Mindanao, the food basket of the Philippines.

They said the initiative would make Mindanao globally competitive, particularly for its exports that range from fruits and vegetables to fish products. *Judy Quiros, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

DA to revive shrimp sector

By Carla P. Gomez
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—AGRICULTURE SECRETARY Domingo Panganiban said the Department of Agriculture was working on revitalizing the Philippine shrimp industry that has been stagnant for eight years.

"Our destination is clear: to restore our industry to its former stature, to build firmly on our comparative advantages, and to compete on the quality of our products," Panganiban said before some 700 delegates to the 5th National Shrimp Congress held here.

The DA secretary said that for the past eight years, the industry's production levels have remain stagnant while other countries appeared to be gaining strength.

One reason for the decline is that many of the country's prawn farmers have no access to the latest technologies, he said.

Among the remedies DA has identified were the creation of a Shrimp Task Force and the implementation of a comprehensive action plan to control shrimp diseases like the White Spot Syndrome Virus.

The DA has also intensified training and extension operations and now has established standards in bacteriology, fry quality assessment, and water and soil quality, he said.

The DA's Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources has also adopted a five-year development plan to increase shrimp production, which will be implemented from 2006 to 2010.

BFAR Director Malcolm Sarmiento said that the shrimp development plan and the culture of L. vannamei (white shrimp) species were two programs that would bring profitability, sustainability and global competitiveness to the shrimp industry.

"The industry is now entering a new era of hope," he said.

L. vannamei, which was previously banned in the Philippines, is expected to hasten shrimp production.

Panganiban challenged the private sector to work harder to attract investments where these are needed, such as in efforts to produce a new species of shrimp.

DOLE to support growth of animation industry

By Vincent Cabreza
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—SUCCESSFUL movies and cartoon series built around popular American comic book characters have convinced the government to build up the local animation industry, said the Department of Labor and Employment.

The field suffered a setback in the late 1980s and early 1990s when many Filipino animators failed to shift from the traditional celluloid animation format to computer-enhanced productions.

But DOLE Cordillera director Jalilo de la Torre said the Philippines was again the darling of United States cartoon producers, due to the pool talent that the government has amassed from its periodic Animation Skills Olympics.

The activity acts as a survey platform to determine the volume of talent available to fill up the projected demand of 24,400 animators by 2010.

DOLE and the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority are holding their own animation skills tests here next month, encouraged by the large number of artists based in the summer capital, he said.

De la Torre said the country has 4,500 working animators, and this number is expected to increase to 6,800 by yearend, based on the forecast of the Commission on Information and Communication Technology.

He said CICT's labor projections indicate that first-time animators are likely to flood the market this year due to the popularity of the Cartoon Network on cable television, the success of Marvel Studio productions, such as X-Men and Spiderman, and the popularity of Filipino comic book artists in the US like Whilce Portacio.

Gov't gets . . .

From page B1

The BSP's total dividend payments to the national government reached P58.9 billion during the past 12 years. This was in addition to the P32.1 billion in taxes paid since 1999 when the monetary agency's tax-exempt status expired.

For 2005, the BSP posted P4.8 billion in net profits, more than double the P2.1 billion in 2004.

For this year, however, there are concerns from the Monetary Board that net profits might be lower due to the higher cost of mopping-up operations.

Some BSP sources said the Bureau of the Treasury's rejection of higher treasury bill yields to prevent an upward spike in interest rates meant there were more money circulating in the system that the BSP would have to mop up.

The national government can afford to reject high bids because an improved fiscal performance arising from better revenue collection alongside spending restraints has allowed it to reduce the need for additional borrowings.

The government chalked up a budget surplus of P5.8 billion in the lean month of May, marking the second consecutive month that it avoided a deficit.

The May fiscal position—the first time in 20 years that a surplus was achieved that month when revenues were seasonally weak—was due to a combination of higher revenue collection and prudent spending.

This narrowed down the five-month budget deficit to P44.2 billion against the P67.8-billion shortfall posted in the same period last year.

US firm eyes ₱1-B specialty . . .

From page B1

the site of its proposed American Specialty Hospital, a state-of-the-art medical center that will be accredited by the Joint Commission International.

Chua said the proposed facility was estimated to cost between P500 million and P750 million, but total investments could reach P1 billion due to the cost of medical equipment.

"This world-class hospital will cater to medical tourism and serve as an economic boost to the economy of Cebu, the neighboring provinces and cities, and also of the country as a whole," Chua said. "The CHA, an American corporation, has taken the initiative and offered to invest in this great venture that could positively impact the whole nation. It behooves the Philippines and the city of Cebu to respond to the challenge."

Since the country is endowed with natural and human resources, he said, it was qualified to venture into medical tourism.

Chua noted that countries such as Thailand and India were expected to earn at least $1 billion a year from medical tourism, which was projected to grow by 33 percent a year.

He said the prospects for medical tourism were quite bright since medical procedures were expensive in the United States.

For example, Chua said an open-heart surgery that costs between $60,000 and $70,000 in the United States cost only $8,000 in the Philippines.

The CHA is also encouraging local physicians to invest in the proposed hospital in Cebu, he said.

He said a number of physicians based in Cebu, Bohol, Dumaguete City, Oroquieta City and Ozamis City have committed to invest in the proposed American Specialty Hospital. He will also be meeting with physicians from other areas like Iloilo.

"I have pledges from 20 physicians, mostly cardiologists and internal medicine physicians," Chua said.

The American Specialty Hospital concept is similar to that of the CHA, since investor-physicians own the majority of its four hospitals, he explained.

The proposed hospital will also honor US-based medical insurance such as Blue Cross, Blue Shield and Medicare Healthcare Insurance, according to Chua, a cardiac surgeon emeritus of Northwest Indiana.

"This health care coverage is expected to entice millions of overseas Filipinos (*balikbayans*) and foreigners to retire in the Philippines," he said.

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Editor Leo Magno

INFOTECH

Text us your feedback: inquirer it name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

Mobile TV is 'snack TV,' says Ericsson

By Erwin Oliva
Contributor

SINGAPORE—PEOPLE WILL SPEND less than 5 minutes watching television programs on their mobile phone, a consumer survey from telecommunications vendor Ericsson showed.

Also, unlike today's television viewers, mobile TV users want content on demand anytime, anywhere and on any device.

Mobile television is now attracting vendors such as Ericsson because of the potential business it can create from delivering content directly to users. However, as Ericsson executives stressed in this year's CommunicAsia briefings, mobile television will entail upgrades to existing mobile networks that will allow them to deliver condensed versions of television content to mobile devices.

Aptly called "snack TV," telecommunications vendors now believe that mobile TV is the "best way to deliver content to today's mobile users."

Citing a study conducted in Germany, Hakan Djuphammar, Ericsson vice president of systems management and research and development, said that consumers spent several minutes on the average to view television content from mobile devices.

Nonetheless, networks vendors are now developing technologies and standards that will handle content-heavy applications, such as mobile television or IP (Internet Protocol) TV.

IP TV is also an emerging technology that puts more intelligence on broadcast networks. It still follows the principles of broadcasting, which is one source to many. However, IP TV uses digital technology and intelligent networks to enable on-demand content.

The technologies and standards behind mobile TV or IP TV are still evolving, the Ericsson executive stressed.

On the other end, the handset manufacturers are only expected to deliver next year the better handsets that can support these new applications, Djuphammar added.

Level-Up! surrenders to underground economy

By Alexander Villafania
Contributor

IF YOU CAN'T BEAT THEM, JOIN THEM. And for online game distributor Level-Up! it would be time to capitalize on the growing popularity of real-money trading (RMT) and "bots."

Instead of weeding out cheaters and sellers of game items, Level-Up! is supporting the growing underground virtual economy by coming up with some activities related to RMT and bots.

For one, Level-Up!, which distributes several titles including the popular Ragnarok, is already letting its players sell items through its official online forums (www.levelupgames.ph).

The company is even planning to have an online auction of rare items on June 28. Although the online auction is not new for the company, the money would be real and not just using Ragnarok's "zenny" currency.

And for users of automated Ragnarok characters called "bots," the company said it is allowing players to continue using them if only to collect zennies and items. Only during guild competitions would bot users not be allowed entry.

RMT is trading of virtual game items, especially rare ones, for real money. Some trades could go as low as a few hundred pesos to as high as thousands of pesos.

Likewise, bots are software added to the installation client of a game. Bots have specific functions but are often used by players to collect more zennies or items.

"The online game community has become so organic and so diverse that it would be hard to control people from going beyond the bounds of game rules. It's not cheating anymore because everyone is doing it already and it's becoming beneficial for everyone," according to Level-Up! Chief Operating Officer Sheila Paul.

Paul stressed that RMT is beyond the control of any game distributor since its players can do their trading discreetly.

On the other hand, bot users are hard to identify especially since some of the bots' responses are "intelligent" unless these become repetitive.

She added that bot users are also the same ones who sell the items they found for real money.

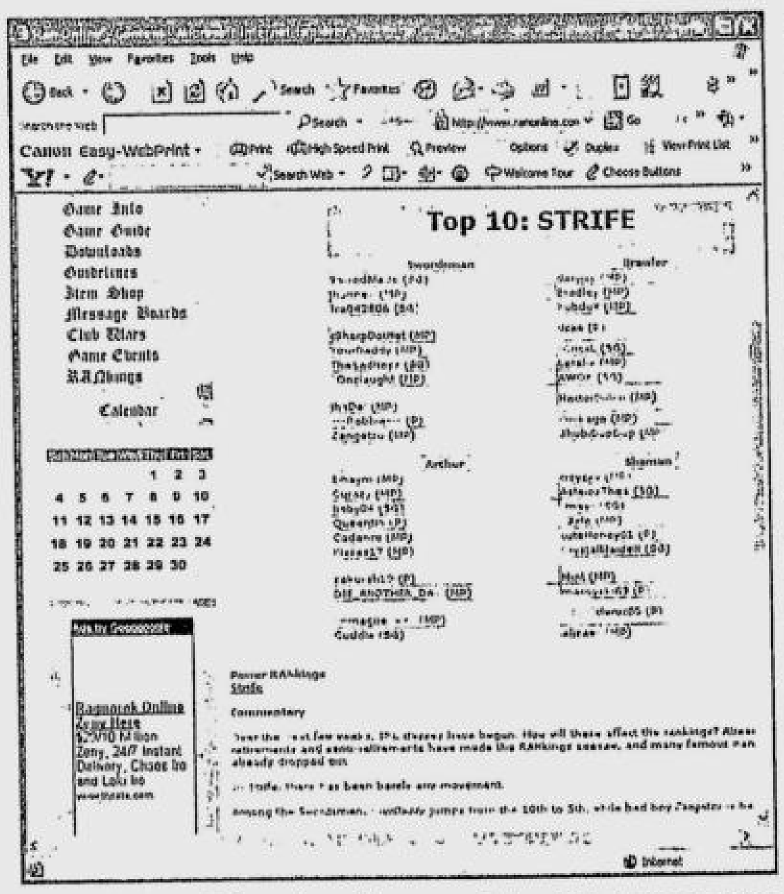
"It's becoming a lucrative business and for one thing, even bot users still have to pay for the time they play the game," Paul said.

Level Up! earns from Ragnarok primarily through top-up cards users need to buy to play the game for a certain amount of time.

Paul admitted that at any given time, a fifth of Ragnarok players are using bots.

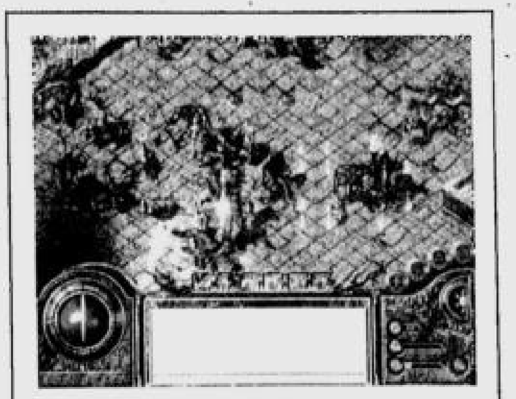
While Level-Up! has limited methods against RMTs, the company is still hoping to manage bot users by telling guild masters to monitor their members.

"But our message about RMT and bot usage is this: if you're using them, be responsible," Paul said.



Ragnarok Online Zeny Here
$29/10 Million Zeny, 24/7 Instant Delivery, Chaos lo and Loki lo

NOTE the lower left portion of the screenshot, which shows an online advertisement selling 10 million Ragnarok zennies for $29.



LEGEND of Mir, which became the most popular online game in China, will soon invade Philippine shores

Legend of Mir II to be launched locally in July

By Alexander Villafania
Contributor

ONLINE GAME DISTRIBUTOR OKEY-Dokey Interactive will commercially launch the online game Legend of Mir II in July, months after it started open beta testing.

Okey-Dokey will be introducing prepaid cards from as low as P20 for three hours of gameplay to as high as P350 for unlimited play for a month.

An online payment scheme through myAyala.com (www.myayala.com) and through PayPal will also be introduced.

On the other hand, Legend of Mir II players do not have to pay for playing until their characters reach level 22, which is the time when rarer items become available.

Legend of Mir II was the most popular massively multiplayer online role-playing game (MMORPG) for a time in China. It was developed by South Korean game firm Wemade Entertainment Co. It is targeted mainly at the serious MMORPG gamers who play such titles as Khan, Tantra, RF Online and Guild Wars, among others.

Okey-Dokey President Jeffrey Yeung said it was time to launch the game as more players have started downloading the installation client. He said that they have had 16,000 local downloads of the installation clients though they have been monitoring offshore downloads from Italy and the United Kingdom.

"We're using the English version of Legend of Mir II so it's no surprise that other players from abroad would want to play the game in our local servers. We have about 400 foreign downloads so far," Yeung said.

REGIONAL
TRIPARTITE WAGES and
PRODUCTIVITY BOARD
NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Labor and Employment
Room 11-C, 11/F, G.E. Antonino Building
corner T.M. Kalaw & J. Bocobo Streets,
Ermita, Manila
Telefax: 527-51-55/400-67-65

WAGE ORDER No. NCR-12

PROVIDING AN INCREASE IN THE DAILY MINIMUM WAGE IN THE NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION

WHEREAS, under R.A. No. 6727, the **Regional Tripartite Wages and Productivity Board - National Capital Region** (RTWPB – NCR), is mandated to periodically assess the wage rates, and to conduct continuing studies in the determination of the minimum wage rates applicable in the region or industry;

WHEREAS, the continuing rise of the price of oil in the world market resulted to frequent adjustments in the price of local oil and petroleum products;

WHEREAS, such adjustments have contributed to a substantial increase in the prices of basic goods, and services and have eroded the real wage of the minimum wage earners since the last wage order was issued;

WHEREAS, on 16 May 2006, the Trade Union Congress of the Philippines filed a petition for a Seventy-Five Pesos (P75.00) per day across-the-board and region-wide basic wage increase;

WHEREAS, on 21 June 2006, the National Federation of Labor Unions lodged a petition for the grant of One Hundred Pesos (P100.00) increase in the basic pay and the integration of the Fifty Pesos (P50.00) Emergency Cost Of Living Allowance into the basic pay;

WHEREAS, the Board, after due notice to all concerned sectors, conducted consultations with Workers' and Employers' Sectors, the Regional Tripartite Industrial Peace Council and Tripartite Industrial Peace Councils within Metro Manila on the 5th, 8th and 9th of June 2006, respectively, and a public hearing on the 21st of June 2006, to determine the propriety of issuing a new wage order;

WHEREAS, it is necessary to restore the purchasing power of wages without impairing the viability of businesses and industries, and to augment the income of the workers and their families with immediate relief measures to enable them to cope with the rising cost of living;

WHEREAS, the Regional Tripartite Wages and Productivity Board has deemed it necessary to grant an increase in the minimum wage rates of workers and employees;

NOW THEREFORE, by virtue of the power and authority vested under Republic Act No. 6727, as amended, otherwise known as the Wage Rationalization Act, the Regional Tripartite Wages and Productivity Board - National Capital Region hereby issues this Wage Order:

Section 1. AMOUNT OF INCREASE. Upon the effectivity of this Wage Order, all minimum wage workers in the private sector in the National Capital Region shall receive an increase of **TWENTY-FIVE PESOS** (P25.00) per day in their basic pay.

Section 2. THE NEW MINIMUM WAGE RATES. The new daily minimum wage rates in the National Capital Region shall be as follows:

INDUSTRY/SECTOR	BASIC WAGE per day under WO NCR – 12	Daily ECOLA under WO NCR - 09	Daily ECOLA under WO NCR - 10, as, amended	TOTAL DAILY MINIMUM WAGE
Non-Agriculture	P300	P30	P20	P350
Agriculture (Plantation and Non-Plantation)	P263	P30	P20	P313
Private Hospitals with bed capacity of 100 or less	P263	P30	P20	P313
Retail/Service Establishments employing 15 workers or less	P263	P30	P20	P313
Manufacturing Establishments regularly employing less than 10 workers	P263	P30	P20	P313

Section 3. COVERAGE. The wage increase prescribed herein shall apply to all minimum wage earners in the private sector in the Region, regardless of their position, designation or status, and irrespective of the method by which their wages are paid.

This Wage Order shall not cover household or domestic helpers; persons in the personal service of another, including family drivers; and workers of registered Barangay Micro Business Enterprises (BMBEs) with Certificates of Authority.

Section 4. BASIS OF MINIMUM WAGE RATES. The minimum wage rates prescribed under this Order shall be for the normal working hours which shall not exceed eight (8) hours of work a day

Section 5. APPLICATION TO PRIVATE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS. In the case of private educational institutions, the share of covered workers and employees in the increase in tuition fees for School Year 2006-2007 shall be considered as compliance with the increase prescribed herein. However, payment of any shortfall in the wage increase set forth herein shall be covered starting School Year 2007-2008.

Private educational institutions, which have not increased their tuition fees for the School Year 2006-2007, may defer compliance with the provisions of this Wage Order until the beginning School Year 2007-2008.

In any case, all private educational institutions shall implement the increase prescribed herein starting School Year 2007-2008.

Section 6. APPLICATION TO CONTRACTORS. In case of contracts for construction projects and for security, janitorial and similar services, the increase in the minimum wage prescribed herein shall be borne by the principal or client of the contractor and the contract shall be deemed amended accordingly as mandated under the Labor Code.

In the event, however, that the principal or client fails to pay the prescribed wage rates, the construction/service contractor shall be jointly and severally liable with his principal or client.

Section 7. WORKERS PAID BY RESULT. All workers paid by result, including those who are paid on piecework, "*takay*," "*pakyaw*" or task basis, shall be entitled to receive the prescribed increase per eight (8) hours work a day, or a proportion thereof for working less than eight (8) hours.

Section 8. WAGES OF SPECIAL GROUPS OF WORKERS. Wages of apprentices and learners shall in no case be less than seventy-five percent (75%) of the applicable minimum wage rates prescribed in this Order. All qualified handicapped workers shall receive the full amount of the minimum wage rate prescribed herein pursuant to Republic Act No. 7277, otherwise known as the Magna Carta for Disabled Persons.

All recognized learnership and apprenticeship agreements entered into before the effectivity of this Order shall be considered automatically modified insofar as their wage clauses are concerned to reflect the new prescribed minimum wage.

Section 9. EXEMPTIONS. Upon application with and as determined by the Board, based on documentation and other requirements in accordance with applicable rules and regulations issued by the Commission, the following may be exempted from the applicability of this Order:

1. Distressed Establishments;
2. Establishments Facing Potential Losses;
3. Retail/Service Establishments Employing Not More Than Ten (10) Workers; and,
4. Establishments whose total assets, including those arising from loans, but exclusive of the land on which the particular business entity's office, plant and equipment are situated, are not more than Three Million Pesos (P3,000,000.00).

Section 10. APPLICATION FOR EXEMPTION. Pursuant to the National Wages and Productivity Commission Resolution No. 01, series of 1999, all applications for exemption from compliance with this Order shall be filed within seventy-five (75) days from the date of publication of the Rules Implementing this Order, with complete supporting documents as specified in the Rules and as may be further required by the Board. Failure to submit the required supporting documents within the prescribed period will be sufficient basis for the dismissal of the application for exemption.

The Board may grant a partial or full exemption of one (1) year in accordance with the NWPC Rules on Exemption, but in no case shall any exemption exceed one (1) year from the effectivity of this Order.

Section 11. EFFECT OF APPLICATION FOR EXEMPTION. Whenever an application for exemption has been duly filed with the Board, action on any complaint for alleged non-compliance with this Wage Order shall be deferred pending its resolution.

In the event that the application for exemption is not granted, or otherwise not confirmed in accordance with the Rules, the employees of the applicant firm shall receive the mandated wage increase under this Order, plus one percent (1%) interest per month retroactive to the effectivity of this Order.

Section 12. APPEAL TO THE COMMISSION. Any party aggrieved by this Wage Order may file an appeal to the Commission, through the Board, in two legible copies, not later than ten (10) days from the publication of this Wage Order.

Section 13. CREDITABLE WAGE INCREASE. An increase granted by an employer in an organized establishment within three (3) months prior to the effectivity of this Order shall be credited as compliance with the prescribed increase set forth herein, provided that an agreement to this effect has been forged between the parties or a collective bargaining agreement provision allowing creditability exists. In the absence of such an agreement or provision in the CBA, any increase granted by the employer shall not be credited as compliance with the increase prescribed in this Order.

In unorganized establishments, an increase granted by the employer within five (5) months prior to the effectivity of this Order shall be credited as compliance therewith.

In case the increases given are less than the prescribed adjustment, the employer shall pay the difference. Such increases shall not include anniversary increases, merit wage increases and those resulting from the regularization or promotion of employees.

Section 14. EFFECTS ON EXISTING WAGE STRUCTURE. Where the application of the increase prescribed in this Order results in distortions in the wage structure within the establishment, it shall be corrected in accordance with the procedure provided for under Article 124 of Presidential Decree No. 442, as amended, otherwise known as the Labor Code of the Philippines.

Section 15. COMPLAINTS FOR NON-COMPLIANCE. Complaints for non-compliance with the wage increase set forth in this Order shall be filed with the National Capital Regional Office of the Department of Labor and Employment, and shall be the subject of enforcement proceedings under Articles 128 and 129 of the Labor Code, as amended.

Section 16. NON-DIMINUTION OF BENEFITS. Nothing in this Order shall be construed to eliminate or in any way diminish, or as authorizing the reduction of any existing wage rates, allowances, benefits and supplements of any form under existing laws, decrees, issuances, executive orders, and/or under any contract or agreement between the workers and employers, or employer practices or policies, being enjoyed at the time of the promulgation of this Order.

Section 17. PROHIBITION AGAINST INJUNCTION. No preliminary or permanent injunction, or temporary restraining order may be issued by any court, tribunal or other entity against any proceeding before the Board.

Section 18. FREEDOM TO BARGAIN. The Order shall not be construed to prevent workers in particular firms or enterprises of industries from bargaining for higher wages and flexible working arrangements with their respective employers.

Section 19. PENAL PROVISIONS. Any employer who refuses or fails to pay the prescribed minimum wage rate provided under this Wage Order shall be subject to the penalties specified under R.A. No. 6727, as amended by R.A. No. 8188.

Section 20. REPEALING CLAUSE. All orders, issuances, rules and regulations or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Order are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

Section 21. SEPARABILITY CLAUSE. If any provision or part of this Wage Order is declared unconstitutional, or in conflict with existing law, the other provisions or parts thereof shall remain valid. Nothing in this Order shall be construed to reduce any existing wage rate, allowance or other benefit under existing laws, decrees, issuance, and orders or under any contract or agreement between workers and employers.

Section 22. IMPLEMENTING RULES. The Regional Tripartite Wages and Productivity Board - National Capital Region shall prepare the necessary Rules and Regulations to implement this Order subject to approval by the Secretary of Labor and Employment.

Section 23. EFFECTIVITY. This Order shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in a newspaper of general circulation.

APPROVED.
Manila, Philippines, 23 June 2006.

I dissent.
(Sgd.) DANIEL R. ANG
Labor Representative

(Sgd.) VICENTE LEOGARDO, JR.
Employer Representative

I dissent.
(Sgd.) GERMAN N. PASCUA, JR.
Labor Representative

On leave.
CLETO T. VILLATUYA
Employer Representative

(Sgd.) MA. THERESA L. PELAYO
Vice-Chairperson

(Sgd.) DENNIS M. ARROYO
Vice-Chairperson

(Sgd.) RICARDO S. MARTINEZ, SR.
Chairperson

(PDI—June 26, 2006)

DAVAO CITY WATER DISTRICT

J.P. Laurel Ave., Davao City
Tel. # 221-9400

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

1. The Davao City Water District, with the Approved Budget for 2006 intends to apply the sum *(see schedule under 2)* being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under contracts as listed below. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at bid opening.

2. The Davao City Water District now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for the following:

Package	DESCRIPTION	Approved Budget for the Contract	Bid Security (1% of ABC)	Cost of Bid Documents
1	VARIOUS BRASS FITTINGS (REBIDDING)	P2,579,000.00	25,790.00	1,500.00
2	2 sets Computer Aided Design and Drafting Software w/ complete user's Manual or Guide (REBIDDING)	500,000.00	5,000.00	1,000.00
3	Wall Mounted Chlorine Dioxide Generator System (REBIDDING)	600,000.00	6,000.00	1,000.00
4	Liquid Chlorine (REBIDDING)	5,083,200.00	50,832.00	2,500.00
5	12 UNITS – STAINLESS STEEL WATER STORAGE TANK (REBIDDING)	533,997.00	5.340.00	1,000.00
6	3 UNITS VIBRATORY RAMMER (REBIDDING)	391,000.00	3,910.00	1,000.00

3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belowing to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.

4. Interested Bidders may obtain further information from *Davao City Water District* and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8:00 a.m. up to 5:00 p.m.

5. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of non-refundable fee in the amount *(stated in item no. 2)*. The method of payment will be on Cash Basis. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.

6. The *Davao City Water District* will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on ***July 10, 2006 at 9:00 o'clock A.M. at DCWD BAC-A Secretariat Office, J.P. Laurel Ave., Bajada, Davao City.***

7. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before the ***bidding scheduled time and date at 9:00 o'clock A.M.*** All Bids must be accompanied by a ***Bid Security*** in the form of *Cash or Manager's check* in the amount *(stated in item no. 2)*. Late Bids shall not be accepted.

8. Bid opening shall be ***at the DCWD BAC-A Secretariat Office, J.P. Laurel Ave., Bajada, Davao City*** *on the following schedule:*

PACKAGE No.	BIDDING SCHEDULE, TIME & DATE
1, 2 & 3	JULY 24, 2006 @ 9:00 A.M.
4, 5 & 6	JULY 24, 2006 @ 2:00 P.M.

Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidder's representatives who choose to attend at the address below.

9. The *Davao City Water District* reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Davao City Water District
BAC-A
J.P. Laurel Ave., Bajada Davao City
Tel. No. : 221-9400 (8000)
E-mail add : dcwd@davao-water.gov.ph
Fax No. : 224-5392
Website www.davao-water.gov.ph

(Sgd.) **VIRGINIA S. MARIMON**
BAC-A Chairperson

(PDI – June 19 & June 26, 2006)

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY

Quezon City

NOTICE OF SALE THRU AUCTION/SMDP

The **NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY (NFA)** wishes to announce to all interested Farmer's Organizations (FO's), Retailers and other interested NFA licensed wholesalers/millers that NFA will be accepting sealed offers for the Sale thru Auction/SMDP of 62,200 MT More or Less 15% brokens Imported Vietnam Rice 2006 Arrivals and 2,843 MT 15% brokens Imported Vietnam Rice 2005 Arrivals stored in Davao, Cebu, NCR, Albay and Batangas warehouses as follows:

LOCATION	VOLUME	VARIETY	INDICATIVE PRICE
Cebu	5,860 MT	15% Brokens Vietnam Rice 2006 Arrivals	P 1,050.00/bg
Davao	6,500 MT	-do-	P 1,050.00/bg
NCR	46,000 MT	-do-	P 1,050.00/bg
Albay	2,250 MT	-do-	P 1,050.00/bg
Batangas	2,843 MT	15% Brokens Vietnam Rice 2005 Arrivals	P 975.00/bg

The pre-Auction conference and SMDP proper shall be conducted simultaneously in Manila (for NCR, Albay and Batangas stocks) Cebu City and Davao City at 2:00 p.m on the following dates:

Venue	Contact Person	Pre-Auction Conference	Auction Proper
NFA Cebu Office Gov. M. Cuenco Ave, Banilad, Cebu City (for Visayas and Reg IX bidders)	Mr. Raul Chong Tel. # (032) 232-1939 (032) 232-6832	June 27 July 3	June 29, 2006 July 5, 2006
NFA Davao Office Sta. Ana Ave., Davao City (for Mindanao bidders)	Ms. Dianne Silva Tel. # (083) 554-3200 (082) 227-4166	June 27 July 3	June 29, 2006 July 5, 2006
FDC, FTI Compound Taguig, Metro Manila (for Luzon bidders)	Ms. Esple Tecson Tel.# 712-1708 712-1572	June 27 July 3	June 29, 2006 July 5, 2006

All interested bidders/buyers are required to submit the following documents:

a. Original and xerox copy of NFA license (retailing, wholesaling and/or milling)
b. In case of representative, a duly notarized authorization from the owner, partner, chairman or president that he or she is authorized to represent the business entity in the pre-SMDP and SMDP proper and all activities thereto.
c. Offer must be accompanied by Bid Bond equivalent to 10% of the volume bidded in the form of Cashier's or Manager's check payable to NFA issued by a reputable commercial bank in Metro Manila.

Interested bidders may secure the Terms and Conditions starting June 27, 2006 at the aforementioned venues from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. For any inquiries, interested bidders may call the above-mentioned contact persons.

Bid documents will be available during the pre-SMDP conference to qualified bidders/offerors upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P1,000.00 for FO's/retailers and P2,000.00 for other interested bidders (wholesalers/millers).

The National Food Authority reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any formality thereof, and to accept only such bids that are advantageous to the Agency.

(Sgd.) **CONRADO DL. IBANEZ**
Assistant Administrator and
Chairman, Disposition Committee

(PDI - June 24 & 26, 2006)

INYOUNG-PHILIPPINES, INC.

based in Subic Bay is in urgent need of high calibre individuals to join our team.

PRODUCTION PROJECT MANAGER

→ Graduate of Civil Engineering course;
→ Familiar on Steel Plate Product engineering analysis;
→ Must have related work experience in Steel Plate Production;
→ Responsible in the implementation of the related project;
→ At least five (5) years related work experience in Engineering management specifically in plant production;
→ Excellent communication skills

PRODUCTION TECHNICAL MANAGER

→ Graduate of Mechanical Engineering course;
→ Excellent Computer application operation;
→ Familiar on Steel Plate Product engineering analysis;
→ At least five (5) years related work experience in Eng'g management;
→ Must have related work experience in Steel Plate Production;
→ Must have related work experience in material planning;
→ Prepares technical drawing and specification specifically steel manufacturing and fabrication;
→ Excellent communication skill

ADMINISTRATION MANAGER

→ Graduate of any business related course preferably with masters in Business Administration;
→ Must have related work experience in Admin Management;
→ At least eight (8) years related work experience in Administration management;
→ Excellent communication skill

Interested applicants may directly apply and/or submit their resumé to the address indicated below:

INYOUNG-PHILIPPINES, INC.
Human Resources Department
Portion of Block 11 and 15 SRF Compound,
Subic Bay Freeport Zone, Zambales
Telephone No. (047) 252-5375-77; Facsimile: (047) 252-5379

Republic of the Philippines
NEGROS STATE COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE
Kabankalan City, Negros Occidental
Cell Phone Nos. 09206238718/09173015565
Fax No. c/o OfficeCom-Kabankalan. (034) 471-3425

THE SEARCH COMMITTEE FOR THE NEGROS STATE COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE (NSCA) PRESIDENCY

Announces the opening of the

SEARCH FOR NSCA PRESIDENCY

Minimum Qualifications:

1. A holder of a Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)/Doctor of Education (Ed.D) or any earned doctoral degree in related academic fields;
2. Must have five years relevant managerial and administrative experience;
3. Must be a natural born Filipino citizen with proven integrity and not convicted with any administrative and/or criminal cases; and
4. Preferably not more than sixty (60) years old:

Applicants are requested to submit the following requirements:

5. Letter of Application;
6. Comprehensive Resumé supported with authenticated documents;
7. Vision and Mission for the Negros State College of Agriculture;
8. Birth Certificate, NBI, Ombudsman and Police Clearances, and disclosure of Assets and Liabilities and current and pending administrative/criminal case/s;
9. Service Records
10. Physical, psycho neuro and drug test

In addition, applicants are requested to submit five (5) sets of formal applications and certified support documents not later than **July 15, 2006** to

Dr. Wenceslao O. Sison, Jr.
c/o DR. MILAGROS M. ROMERO
Member, NSCA Search Committee for Presidency
CHED Regional Office VI
# 12 New Washington Street, Jaro, Iloilo City
Tel. No. (033) 3206976

and for queries, please contact the Secretariat, through the Board Secretary, Nelly Navales-Cabual, Negros State College of Agriculture, Kabankalan City, Negros Occidental with contact Numbers 09173015561 or 09206238718.

(PDI – June 12 19 & 26 2006)

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cferza Academic Publications

is in need of the following:

Independent Book Dealers

- To distribute educational materials to both elementary and secondary schools
- Educators/Teachers may apply

Writers

- To write for a publication for teachers
- To write for children's book in the elementary level
- History and education backgrounds are a plus

Subject Specialists

- To develop creative programs for teaching in the following elementary level subjects: History, Music, Arts, P.E. and Filipino

For more information, please call:
(02) 541-9754
(043) 757-2764, (043) 757-3691, (043) 756-0286
(Look for Angelo or Glennford)

PNOC ENERGY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Merritt Road, Fort Bonifacio, 1200 Taguig City, Philippines
P.O. Box 2102 MCPO, Tel. Nos. 893-6001 to 47/893-1320 Fax No. 840-1575

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

PNOC-Energy Development Corporation (PNOC-EDC) invites interested contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the project:

TWO (2) YEAR RENTAL OF 2 UNITS AIRCON BUSES FOR MINDANAO GEOTHERMAL PRODUCTION FIELD (MGPF)

EDC 06-034-1

The approved project cost is P9,216,000.00 to be charged against PNOC-EDC fund. The contract duration is Two (2) years.

Application forms for eligibility and the bidding documents may be secured from the PNOC-EDC Contracts Administration Group, Fort Bonifacio (c/o N. P. Calling) starting **June 19, 2006 between 9:30 to 3:30 cashiering time upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Pesos: Five Hundred (P500.00).**

For the purpose of clarifying certain issues, a pre-bid conference will be held on **June 28, 2006, 9:30 AM** at PNOC-EDC Davao Logistics Office, Airport Road, Sasa, Davao City.

Applications for Eligibility and sealed bids shall be received by the PNOC-EDC Contracts Administration Group at PNOC-EDC, 1st Floor Building 5, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City, Metro Manila, **not later than 2:00 p.m. on July 11, 2006 (Contracts Administration Group Office Wall Clock Time)** and shall be publicly opened immediately thereafter.

PNOC-EDC reserves the right to reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any informality therein, to accept such bids or to award any part of the work to any bidder whose bid is considered most advantageous to PNOC-EDC.

BAC CHAIRMAN

(PDI – June 18 & June 26, 2006)

ONLINE

www.henrybutcher.com

SALE BY ONLINE AUCTION

Ball Point Pen Manufacturing Line and Ancillary Equipment

Sale Closing: Thursday, 29 June 2006 - 6:00PM (local time)

Location of Assets: San Juan, Philippines

BETOL/MIKRON BALL POINT PEN MANUFACTURING LINE comprising: - BETOL BK50 Extruder; (2) BETOL 1820J Jockey Extruders; BETOL 119-4-8 Water Bath/Vacuum Sizing Unit; BETOL 1064/2 Haul Off Machine; BETOL 2100 Rotary Cutter; MIKRON TLC 2000 Ink Injection Machine

ANCILLARY EQUIPMENT - MIKRON BOY50T2 55T Cap. Plastic Injection Moulding Machine; IWATA COMPAQ 37P Air Compressor w/ IWATA Air Dryer; TRICOOL TRM MKII Chiller w/ Cooling Tower; INGERSOLL RAND Energair Receiver Mounted Compressor; MUHLMANN Hydro Extractor; RAYMOND Plastic Granulator; RAYMOND Colorant/Plastic Mixer, etc.

Viewing: Strictly by Appointment
To register please visit our website: www.henrybutcher.com

For further information please contact Maggie Calderon-Alicante at Tel: 852 2910 loc. 111 Email: mags.calderon@henrybutcher.com

GoIndustry Henry Butcher

HENRY BUTCHER INTERNATIONAL PHILS. INC.
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PMAPERS ATTEND THE 11TH WORLD HR CONGRESS

A delegation of 30 human resource professionals from various member companies of the Personnel Management Association of the Philippines (PMAP) attended the recent 11th World HR Congress in Singapore on May 29-June 1, 2006. The group was led by lawyer Emerico O. de Guzman, a senior partner of ACCRALAW and the current PMAP president, Ernesto Espinosa, past PMAP president and incoming president of the Asia Pacific Federation of Human Resource Management (APFHRM) and Gerardo Plana, the PMAP Executive Director. In photo above are, from left, Daya Bollegala, APFHRM immediate past president, Mdm. Ho Geok Choo, the APFHRM president, Espinosa, Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, lawyer de Guzman and Plana.

More Classified Ads on Pages A23, A26, A28, A30 & B11

"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith"
– 2 Tim 4:7

POLICARPO LAUREL ASCALON

peacefully joined the Lord on June 24, 2006

His wife, **Lita Abad Santos Ascalon**
His children and grandchildren
Olive, **Lope** and **Mark Choa**
Meggie, **Bo**, **Michael** and **Isabella Chichioco**
Ana, **Venu**, **Ravi** and **Ryan Kotamraju**
His brother, sisters, in-laws, nephews, nieces and relatives
request prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

He lies in state at the Santuario de San Antonio Parish, McKinley Road, Forbes Park, Makati City.

Interment will be at Loyola Memorial Park, Parañaque on June 27, 2006 following the 9:00 A.M. Mass at the Main Church at Santuario de San Antonio.

DAFROSA "NANAY ROSING" UY PALMA

of Matuyatuya Torrijos, Marinduque & Rd. 7 GSIS Hills Talipapa, Caloocan City

joined her Creator on June 23, 2006 at 5:15pm.

Her remains now lies in state at Arlington Love Chapel, Araneta Ave., Q.C.

Interment will be on June 29, 2006, Thursday, 2:00pm at Eternal Garden Caloocan City.

"Eternal life will swallow up that which can die. God made us for this very reason and He has given us the Spirit as a guarantee that we will live again."

2 Corinthians 5:4-5

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— *Boy, Angga & Philip, Mario, and Grandchildren*

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John 11:25-26

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of Nagcarlan, Laguna and Quezon City
peacefully joined his Creator at the age of 80.

His beloved wife, **DOLORES**; children **ERICK & HELEN**, **CHITO & JINGLE** and **ED & NOEMI**; grandchildren, **PAOLO**, **EDWARD**, **CHESCA**, **EUGENE**, **ISABEL**, **ERICKA**, **ERICK MATTHEW**, **MONIQUE** and **NOEL**; nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Christ the King Church, Greenmeadows, Quezon City.

His body will be cremated tomorrow, June 27, 2006 at Loyola Marikina after the 10:00 a.m. Mass.

We remember you Mama

JUSTINA "JOSIE" M. SALCEDO

(June 14, 1926 – June 26, 2005)

In commemoration of her 1st death anniversary,
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grandchildren and great grandchildren
kindly request friends, relatives and pious readers
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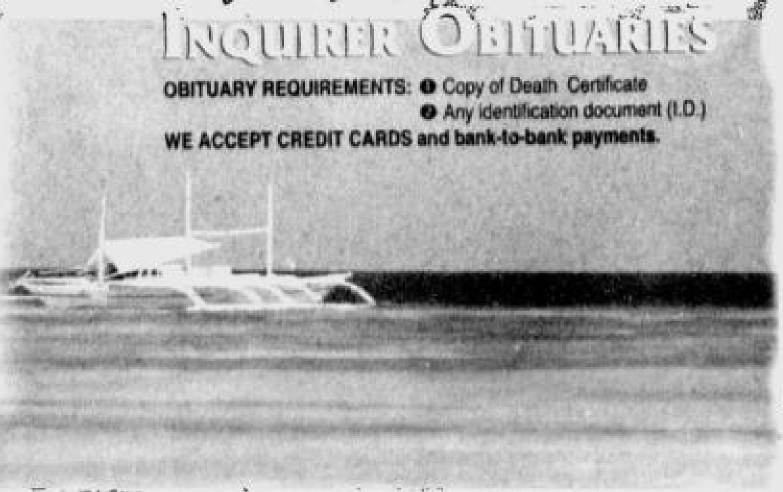
Little Baguio, San Juan 6:00 P.M.



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No immediate end in sight to Globe-Smart pricing row

It may take NTC up to 6 months to resolve the issue

By Daxim L. Lucas

REGULATORS MAY TAKE UNTIL END OF THIS year to decide on the latest pricing scheme dispute between the country's two largest mobile phone firms, according to the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC).

As such, Ayala-controlled Globe Telecom Inc. would have to contend for now with the successful "All Day Texting 258 Call+Text Promo" offered by its rivals Smart Communications Inc. and Pilipino Telephone Corp.

NTC Commissioner Ronald O. Solis said his agency was not favoring any mobile phone firm at this stage of the dispute.

"We will decide [on the case] purely on its merits," he said. "It will take three to six months to decide on this complaint."

Solis added that the commission had yet to deliberate on whether to issue a temporary restraining order (TRO) on the controversial pricing scheme while the case was being heard. In the absence of a TRO, Smart may continue to offer the promo to its estimated 20 million mobile phone service subscribers.

"In implementing these promotional offerings only between the two (Smart and Piltel), they are acting in concert to corner the market and thus create a virtual monopoly," Globe senior vice president for corporate and regulatory affairs Rodolfo A. Salalima said in the complaint filed with the NTC.

Under the scheme, Smart and Piltel subscribers who sign up for the promo will be entitled to send an unlimited number of text messages and a single five-minute call within 24 hours for only P20. The promo is exclusive to users of Smart and Piltel network.

Globe complains that the promo constitutes "predatory pricing" and that it unduly disadvantages other wireless networks which do not have access to the same accommodations from the Smart and Piltel network.

"The speed of the case's resolution will depend on lot of factors," the NTC chief pointed out. "If you followed the Sun 24/7 dispute last year, we resolved it within three to four months."

Solis declined to discuss the merits of the case this early.

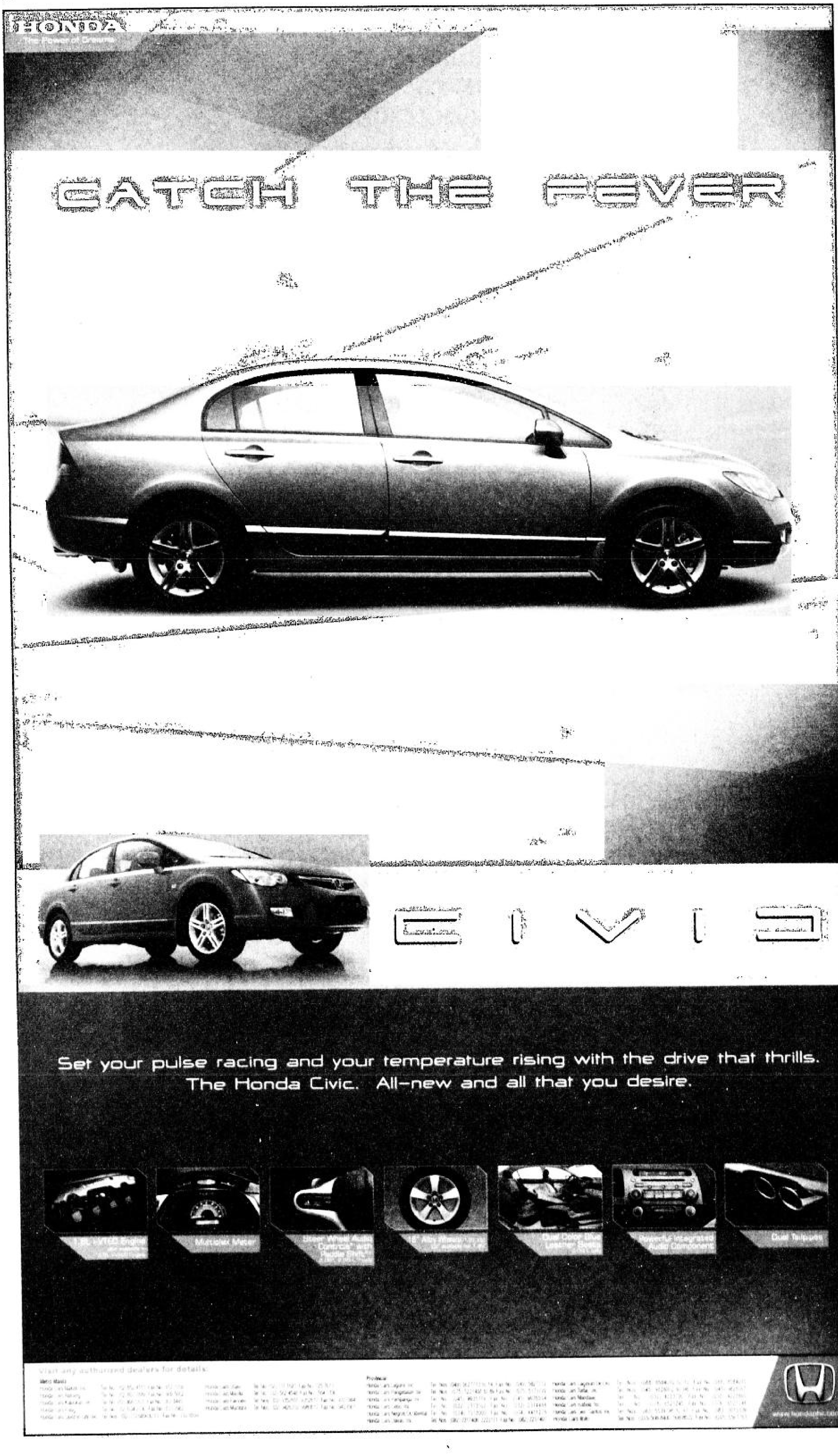
Smart disputed Globe's complaints saying it could not be accused of predatory pricing because it was not offering promos below cost.

Smart officials believe the complaint is a form of harassment by Globe, which the former trounced roundly last year in the battle for the most dominant wireless firm in the country.

"The charge of predatory pricing is not only unmeritorious but is outright absurd in the light of the facts that are fully disclosed to the Commission and even the public in general," Smart's lawyer Ivy L. Plaza-Cortez said in a letter to the NTC.

She pointed out that because Smart and Piltel used the same cellular phone network, it was impossible for both firms to be "interconnected" or to levy access charges from each other that would put it on level pricing terms with its competitors.

Globe, for its part, has suggested that the NTC revoke the franchise of Piltel since it was just piggybacking on the facilities of its sister mobile phone firm.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PSALM focuses on sale of hydro, steam facilities of Napocor

By Abigail L. Ho

WANTING TO ENSURE THE SUCCESS OF its succeeding auctions, Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. plans to first sell National Power Corp. assets that will be attractive to investors even without power supply contracts.

These assets include hydropower and geothermal facilities such as the 112-megawatt (MW) Pantabangan-Masiway and 660-MW Tiwi-Makban asset packages, said PSALM president Nieves Osorio.

PSALM failed to sell the 600-MW Calaca coal-fired power plant last year when only one bidder showed up during the auction. The second auction for the plant, held last April, was also declared a failure when the two bidders failed to meet the $288-million reserve price for the asset.

PSALM officials admitted that the lack of supply contracts with distribution utilities and large power users might have contributed to the reluctance of investors to push through with their bids.

Osorio said hydropower and geothermal facilities were attractive even without supply contracts as these produced low-cost power that would be easy to sell to buyers.

Apart from the lack of supply contracts, another hurdle that PSALM faced in privatizing Napocor's Luzon and Visayas assets was the absence of a universal creditors' consent for all the plants.

But Osorio said she was confident of securing a universal consent from the World Bank soon.

The Japan Bank for International Cooperation had also gotten in touch with PSALM recently with regard to the universal consent, she said.

"We're working on the creditors' consents now. We just want to work on all the issues. We'll start selling plants again when all the issues have been settled," she said.

Under the current set-up, PSALM has to seek the Napocor creditors' consent before it can transfer each of the sold assets to their respective winning bidders.

With a universal consent, however, winning bidders will not have to wait that long, enabling them to immediately take charge of the asset they have bought.

The privatization body has so far sold six Napocor generation facilities, five hydro and one coal-fired. These include the 3.5-MW Talomo plant in Davao for $1.37 million, the 1.6-MW Agusan plant in Bukidnon for $1.53 million, the 1.8-MW Barit plant in Camarines Sur for $480,000, the 0.4-MW Cawayan plant in Sorsogon for US$410,410, the 1.2 MW Loboc plant in Bohol for $1.42 million, and the Masinloc plant for $561.74 million.

The World Bank, JBIC and Asian Development Bank had all given their nod to the transfer of these six plants to their respective winning bidders.

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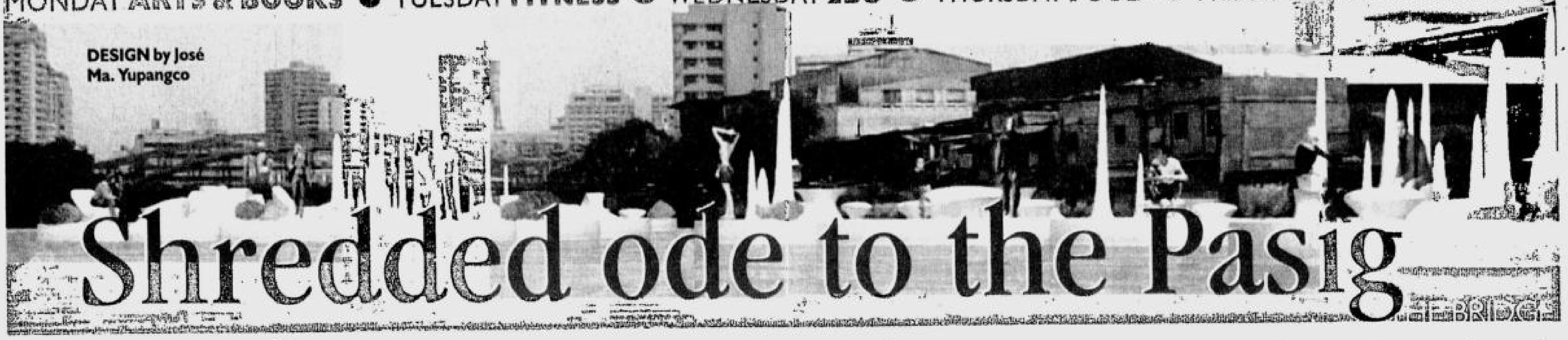

DESIGN by José Ma. Yupangco

Shredded ode to the Pasig

A book offering architectural suggestions on how to revive a great river is recalled from circulation and its copies 'burned'

By Lito B. Zulueta

AN EXHIBIT AT THE AYALA Museum ostensibly to raise awareness on the need to revitalize the Pasig River opens today with a caveat: the book meant to complement the show and containing architectural visions to revive the river has been ordered shredded by the publisher.

The reason: the book focuses more on the architectural designs than on the artworks interpreting the Pasig. Specifically the book fails to provide more space to the works of an artist close to the publisher, the Netanya Jimenez Foundation Inc., according to artist-critic Rod. Paras Perez, who edited the book.

The exhibit, "Ode to the River Pasig," is organized by the Ayala Museum and the Jimenez Foundation, which claims to work closely with the Daughters of Charity at the Hospico de San Jose. "The foundation is active in environmental conservation and is a supporter of projects in literature, music, arts and athletics," an Ayala Museum press announcement said.

The exhibit assembles 56 artworks by 30 Filipino artists from the museum as well as several private collections.

It was Paras-Perez who suggested that architects be included in the exhibit so that the project could yield designs to save and modernize the Pasig.

Paras-Perez said he purposely emphasized the blueprints by top Filipino architects so that the exhibit and book could be forward-looking and helpful in attempts to reinvent and renovate the Pasig.

Among the architects who have contributed designs are Alfredo Juan Aquilizan, Ed Calma, Sid Hildawa, Mark Mallari, Felino Palafox Jr., Cid Reyes and Joey Yupangco.

A catalogue has been rushed to accompany the exhibit after the book that Paras-Perez edited was recalled and shredded. The catalogue focuses on the artworks, giving generous space specifically to the works of Romulo Galicano.

The exhibit includes various interpreta-

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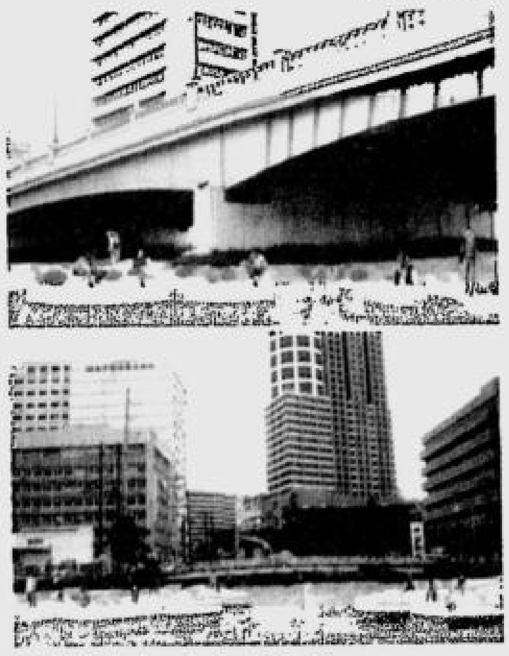
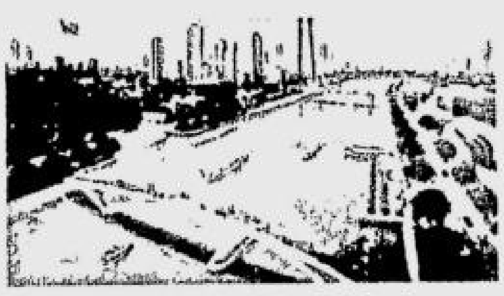


OTHER designs by José Ma. Yupangco



PASIG River vision by Felino Palafox Jr.

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Woman artist holds up a national mirror

By Gino Dormiendo
Contributor

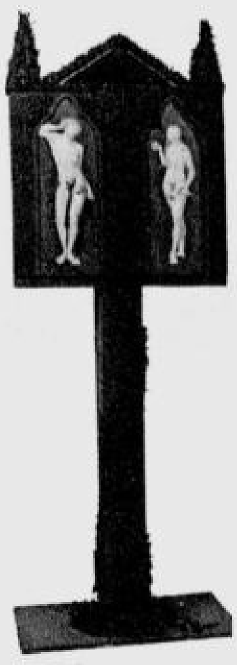
FROM THE PLAYFUL PUN IN THE exhibit title, "One: The Transformation of Juan," (Gallery Genesis, June 28-July 16), the viewer is seduced by the homophonic sounds that allude to the quintessential Pinoy Everyman, the Juan de la Cruz and Juan Tamad of legend and lore, the man in the street, and the ordinary citizen who has been through ups and downs of history.

The artist, Teresita Mapua, has herself been through a cycle of epiphanies in her own life, transforming her persona from educator and administrator of the well-known school bearing the family name that has passed hands. She has become a full-time artist, mentored by such noted artists as social realism stalwart Renato Habulan, printmaker Benjie Cabrera and, lately, potter Hadrian Mendoza. She belongs to the Nakpil Group, self-taught artists who have steered clear of formulaic paths.

Mapua consistently takes off from truly personal turf. A maverick, she prefers to work with discarded objects and industrial remnants that she transforms with her hyperkinetic hands and with a penchant for recycling. Her works brim with valuable lessons from history and the strange ways colonization and enfeebled racial memory have damaged our psyche.

The gallerygoer is welcomed by "The Artist's Door," a freestanding installation of assorted wood in stark black, encrusted with an infinite variety of found objects, mirrors and an assortment of media transfers.

Then one picks up a discarded suitcase ("Mabigat and Dinadala") consisting of odds and ends of an infernal journey that takes Pinoys anywhere and everywhere. Sleekly covered with quilted vinyl and cloth, it sports images from Martin Schongauer's "The Anunciation" and Jonathan Best's "A Philippine Album."



"DAMBANA ni Nene" (above) and "Handbag ni Lola" by Mapua

Then there is "Bukal," where a cup symbolizes the collective hopes of a people driven to diaspora. Finally comes "Birth of Inang Bayan," a partial freestanding installation.

Mapua's next suite is a collective gallery of Pinoy dreams, hopes and, more aptly, illusions. "Dambana ni Nene" opens to a secret apothecary of grocery items, mothballs, manicure implements, shells, mosquito coil—virtual companion pieces in a Pinoy traveler's bag, ubiquitous items on the distaff side, if you will.

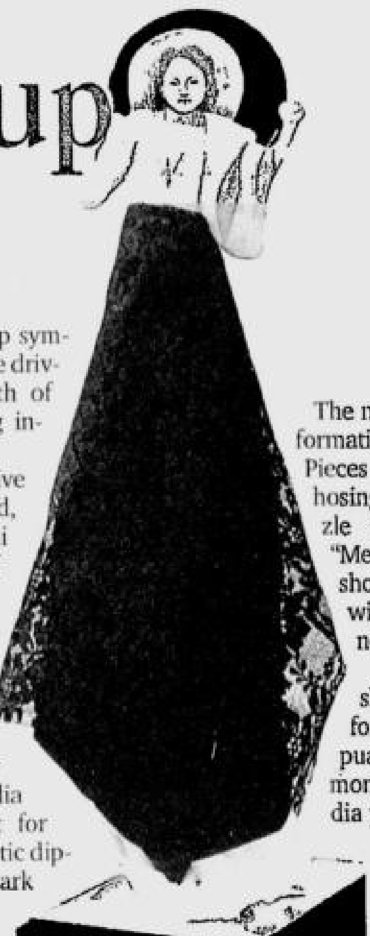
More images confront the viewer in "Kasama Ba Kami," a multimedia work showing the Pinoy penchant for cleanliness—or is it vanity? With plastic dipper, *hilud* for scrubbing, *gugo* as tree bark for shampoo, the images unfolding tell of obsessive body hygiene.

"Kailangan Pa Ba Tayo Magpalimos?" shows a palm outstretched, clutching coins, in a traffic sign with a red slash. It is an image that graphically portrays Pinoy mendicancy.

Most arresting is a diptych showing two women with their respective ammunition: grandmother's *palu-palo* with a laundry bar beside it, and a beer bottle with the label "Chimay," which Mapua had accidentally found in Belgium when she recently made a stopover.

The trip would not have been complete without Lola's handbag, a ubiquitous accessory that, in the artist's rendering, is a ragtag compendium of cloth, ribbon, synthetic cord, and paint—a repository of a woman's worldly possessions and a treasure trove of female vanities.

Poking fun at the Pinoy's penchant for self-aggrandizing tactics, the multimedia piece, "Vested Interest," is literally a vest encrusted with faux coins.



"BIRTH of Inang Bayan," by Mapua

"DAMBANA ni Nene" (open) by Teresita Mapua

The next suite is about transformation, such as "Letting the Pieces Go," with its rubber hosing and mirrors, "The Puzzle Comes Together" and "Meditating One," which shows Buddha's visage with a pair of legs underneath.

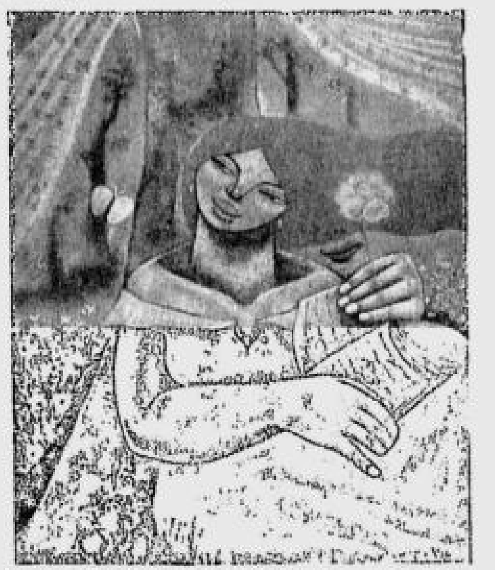
The second half of the show, called "The Transformation Wall," has Mapua's intaglio copperplates, monoprints, and a multimedia piece, "Atin Ito," with its mesh of toy jeeps and maps, a veritable locator for the Pinoy who must find himself/herself in the global maze.

Though the prints could have served a better purpose in another show, Mapua has found them equally essential in stating her case. She believes the Filipino malaise has a deeply spiritual side to it, hence the back-to-the-basics imagery of faces virtually becoming one (it's really the image of Mapua and her only daughter, Oona Tanya, a triathlon athlete who is pursuing her masteral studies at Columbia University in New York).

Though the prints are in a way anticlimactic, one is admonished to dwell on things spiritual and no less vital, and fully contemplate our people's age-old maladies. Then, and only then, can the process of transformation be fully achieved.

Debut show

A debuting artist, Alex Jorge Pingol, is also mounting his first solo exhibit, "Beyond Imagination," at the Heritage Art Center, Art Walk, SM Megamall (until July 10).



"THE FLOWER Girl," by Alex Jorge Pingol

A Fine Arts graduate of University of Santo Tomas, major in Advertising Arts, Pingol works in pastel, exploring the still life, the portraiture, the cycle of planting and harvesting, and Eros.

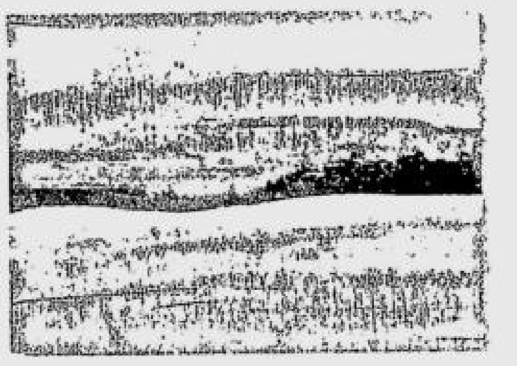
A fervid colorist who started out as an animator for Toonworks, Pingol has a fresh, seductive palette that he puts to good use in filling up his proscribed universe of people, objects and sundry settings.

His figures, particularly of women in various poses of dishabille, are a welter of sensual gazes and poses. The dominant style is unmistakably surreal, the mood Gaugainesque, yet the pervading ambience is replete with signs and meanings of an uncharted world.

E-mail the author at gdormiendo@yahoo.com

Lascano goes with the flow

By Cid Reyes
Contributor



"STREAM of Consciousness" I

MIRRORED IMAGES BETWEEN PAINTING and poetry condensed in "Pondering," a previous exhibition of works by Rico and Chachu Lascano. The paintings of Rico and the haiku-inspired poems of Chachu echoed a contemporary voice that blended modernist painting inflected by an Oriental serenity and haiku poems reminiscent of New Age contemplation. Together, painting and poetry sailed into an experiential delight of the spirit. That watery terrain, the pond, was turned into a beneficent act and object of contemplation.

In the current show, the Lascano couple present multiple exposures of image and words, in the rippling waters that by turn exude the calm acceptance of nature and the struggle to still the raging emotion. The ever flowing current of this artistic exploration presciently bears the title "Stream of Consciousness."

Essentially a literary device, stream of consciousness is a technique that captures the profusion of thoughts and feelings being experienced by a character without regard to logical argument or narrative sequence. The phrase was coined by the psychologist William James in 1890. Novelists as diverse as James Joyce, Virginia Woolf, William Faulkner, J. D. Salinger and Jack Kerouak adapted this device to record the complexities of the human mind. Even Bob Dylan's wailing song "Like a Rolling Stone," boldly employs this technique.

Stream image

As in "Pondering," the current show finds a liberating image in another water metaphor—the stream. In contrast to the pond which is serenity itself, the stream is implicitly moving, flowing, surging, trailing out in unforeseen or unexpected direction.

Thus the poems of Chachu Lascano, with their quietly evocative images and haiku-like terseness, drawing life's lessons from the mystery of the churning waters: "Like a stream I can diverge into two, three paths/My essence not weakening, only flowing, rushing/to the thrill of finding myself whole again." Like Zen illumination, Chachu's poems stream to a crescendo and snap to an end, like sunlight breaking.

In the abstract paintings of Rico Lascano, one feels a reverent lyricism that envelops the pictorial space of his large canvases. The radiance of light upon the water surface is achieved through the sensitive and controlled layering of thinly washed pigment, with their juicy drips highlighted by the filigreed encrustations effected by a fine-toothed comb. White is the dominant base and hue, evolving into myriad nuances when veiled with ashen grays, moss greens, inky blues and russet browns. Still evident is Lascano's trademark stroke: a dragging line which, while gathering force, suddenly darts into a loop, representing either a ripple or a cloud form or simply energizing a static space.

While certain Western influences are evident—Turner's misty watercolors, Monet's lilypad paintings, Zaowouki's nature-inspired canvases—Lascano's paintings must perforce hark back to those ancient Chinese painters from the Sung and Tang period. For instance, the painter Kuo Hsi (c. 1020-1090), who regarded water as the "blood of the universe."

Deep waters

Said he: "Water is a living thing. Its form should be tranquil and deep, it should be expansive, should be circling around, should have body; it should foam and froth and splash and shoot; it should be alive with fresh springs, should have volume to reach a great distance; it should leap over waterfalls from the skies, should crash and hit the land below; it should have happy anglers and thriving vegetation; it should be soft on a misty day and resplendent on a sunny morning. These are the live moments of water."

As Rico and Chachu Lascano will agree, Kuo Hsi's words are a perfect example of stream of consciousness.

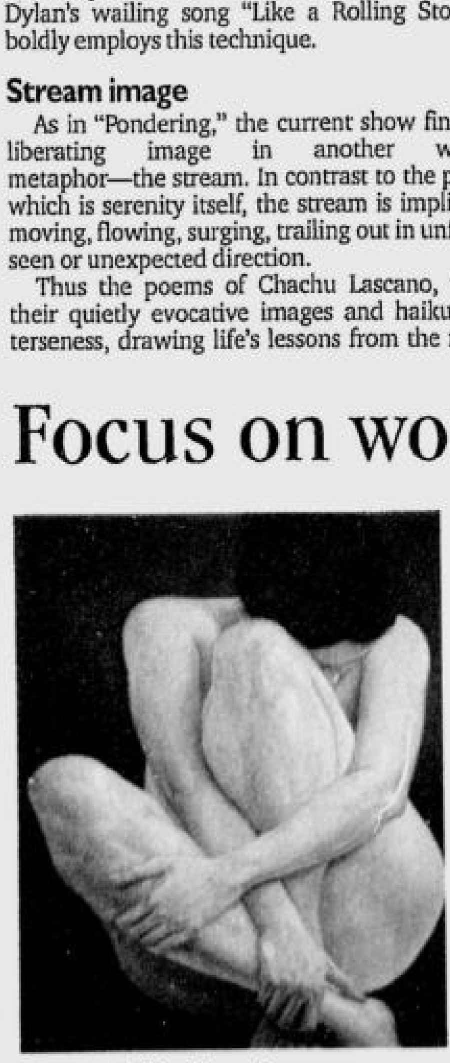
There is a touching surprise to this show: the guest participation of Lascano's 8-year-old son, aptly named Miro, after Joan Miro, Catalan master of wit and spontaneity and poetic innocence.

The four works of Miro Lascano—not surprisingly inflected by the style of the master—are rhythmic inventions of playful forms and delightful colors.

Fortunately for Philippine art, we are, through Miro Lascano, already assured of the next generation of abstractionists.

Stream of Consciousness will run on June 30-July 6 at Galerie Astra, LRI Business Plaza, 210 N. Garcia St. (formerly Reposo), Bel Air II, Makati City. Call 8903988, 7269015.

Focus on women at Joaquin



"FROZEN," by Tupac Rasco

GALERIE JOAQUIN'S "KABABAIHAN" OPENS today. The exhibit is a tribute to the Filipino woman by Jerry Morada, Vincent de Pio, Felix Tiglao and Tupac Rasco.

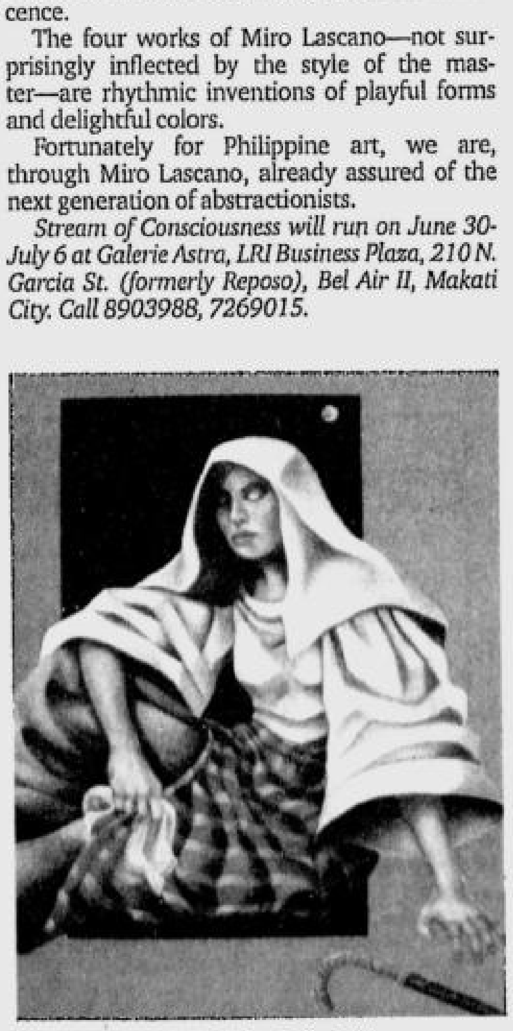
Morada's highly surrealistic style mystifies his women figures clad in Filipiniana. His are bold, intriguingly captivating, and riveting interpretations of women.

Tiglao, originally known for his romantic and impressionistic landscapes, reveals traditional women portrayed in highly modernist compositions.

De Pio's women are self-possessed, graceful, yet solid characters in black and white, accentuated with hints of earth tones or contemporary colors.

Rasco, a painting major in UP, paints larger-than-life renditions of nude women.

Galerie Joaquin is at 371 P. Guevarra St. and Montessori Lane, Addition Hills, San Juan, Metro Manila. Call 7239253 or 7239418 or visit www.galeriejoaquin.com



"PAGHIHINTAY" II, by Felix Tiglao

Filipino artists romancing Europe

By Constantino C. Tejero

WHEN PLACE BECOMES A subject in painting, we usually associate it with landscape painting, reflexively thinking of manmade landmarks or natural formations to identify the setting or location.

This is not always the case, of course, particularly with nontraditional artists. An abstractionist, for example, would most probably choose to depict the mood or idea the place conveys or represents by merely using color, brushstroke and texture.

An interesting take on the subject was recently presented in the group exhibit "Romancing Europe" in Galerie Astra, 2/F, LRI Business Plaza, 210 Nicanor Garcia St. (formerly Reposo), Bel Air II, Makati City.

Here a group of Filipino artists have painted portraits of the European cities they have visited or stayed in, but in a very nonconventional way.

José Datuin, a Fine Arts graduate of University of Santo Tomas who had gone on a Freeman Foundation Asian Fellowship in the Vermont Studio Center, has exhibited in Vienna, Paris, The Hague, Brussels, Rome, Milan, Berlin, Eissen.

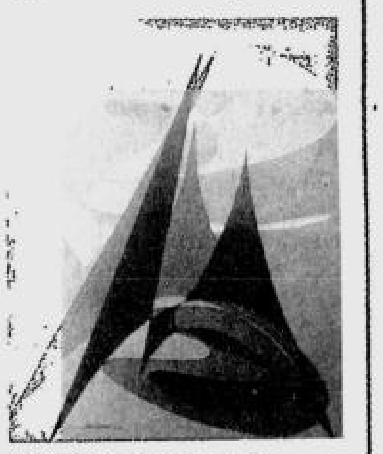
In the exhibit, his pieces in acrylic on canvas are all geometrical abstraction of similar free-floating forms, precise lines, clean shading, swirling movement—and distinguished only by color tonality from canvas to canvas.

Datuin's "Romancing Paris" is of violet, maroon, yellow and turquoise against a background of olive-green. "Brussels" is of gray and primary and secondary colors on slate-blue. "Vienna" is blue, yellow, violet and black on slate-green. "Amsterdam" is red, blue, purple and black on old rose.

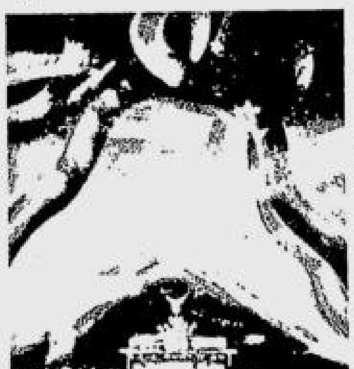
As one can see, this is all very personal. Only the artist can unravel the enigma of the color associations.

Meanwhile, Pierre Patricio, a graduate of Maritime Transportation who had lived, worked and studied art in Greece and Germany, has exhibited in Berlin, Tuscany, Hamburg, Cologne, Brussels, Athens.

In his pieces in mixed media on canvas, he sings of the Continent through impressionistic paintings in cool colors and earth tones. But, these are floral still lifes and abstract representations of earth, wind, water and fire.



"ROMANCING Paris," by José Datuin



"ROMANCING Berlin," by Pancho Piano

Again, this is very personal. If the viewer could feel or sense any European touch to it, it must be the style and technique Patricio uses.

Of the group, the only artist who clearly depicts the subject as Europe is Pancho Piano, a Fine Arts graduate from University of the Philippines who has exhibited in Paris, Berlin, Vienna, Brussels, Eissen, Amsterdam, Milan, Rome, Düsseldorf.

Piano's pieces in mixed media on canvas are quasi-abstraction of vibrant colors, chiefly in warm harmony. But peeking out of those undulating lines and swirling hues are subliminal images that are unmistakably European. In fact, most are iconic images that even a gradeschooler could readily identify.

In Piano's "Romancing Paris," it is the dome and pediment of the Notre Dame Cathedral. In "Milan," it is the Corinthian capital of an ancient column. In "Berlin," the Brandenburg Gate emerges as if from the gray miasma of the past.

In Piano's art, graphic illustration is balanced by rich coloration. Here is the place we recognize as worthy of our romantic imagination.

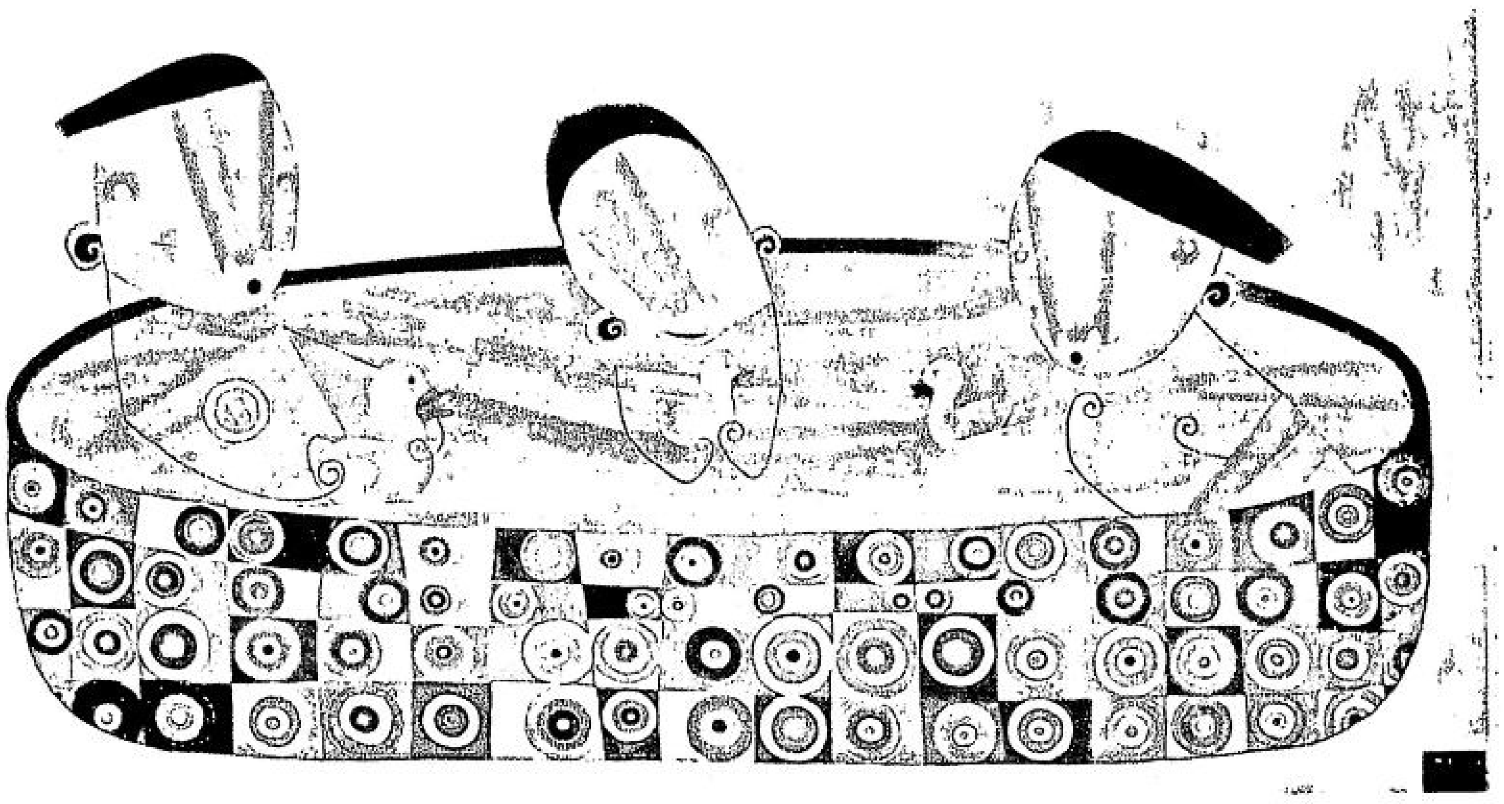
Farley del Rosario's new works at Blanc

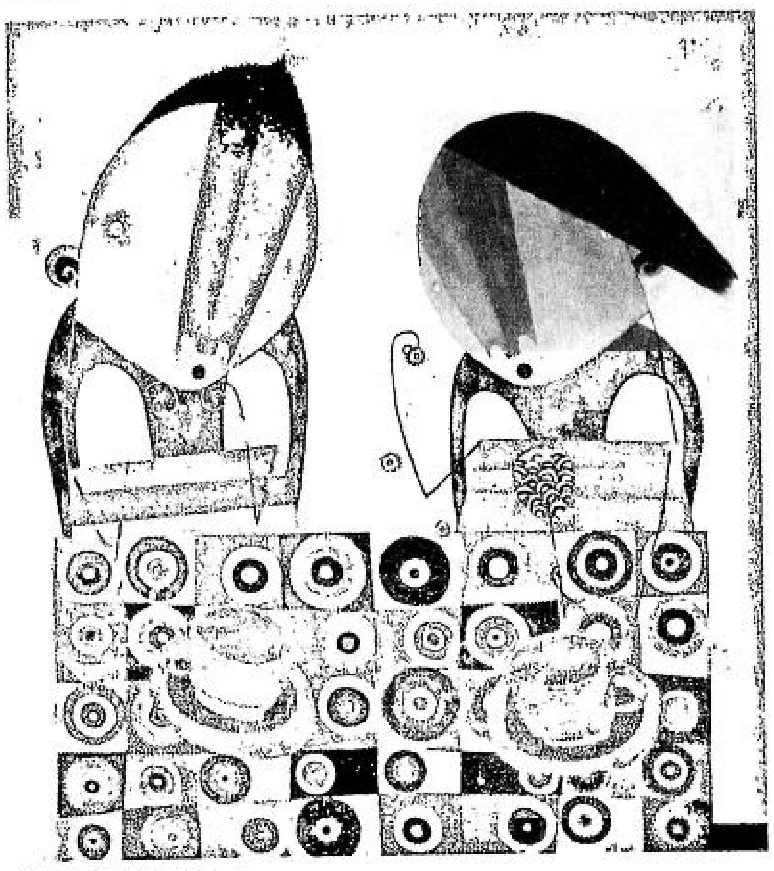
TOP YOUNG ARTIST Farley del Rosario's new works are on exhibit in "At Play," at Blanc Art Space, 2E Crown Tower, 107 Dela Costa St., Salcedo Village, Makati City.

Featured in Del Rosario's signature scenes of delightful frolic and whimsical leisure are the artist's lovable string-necked urchins with curlicued arms.

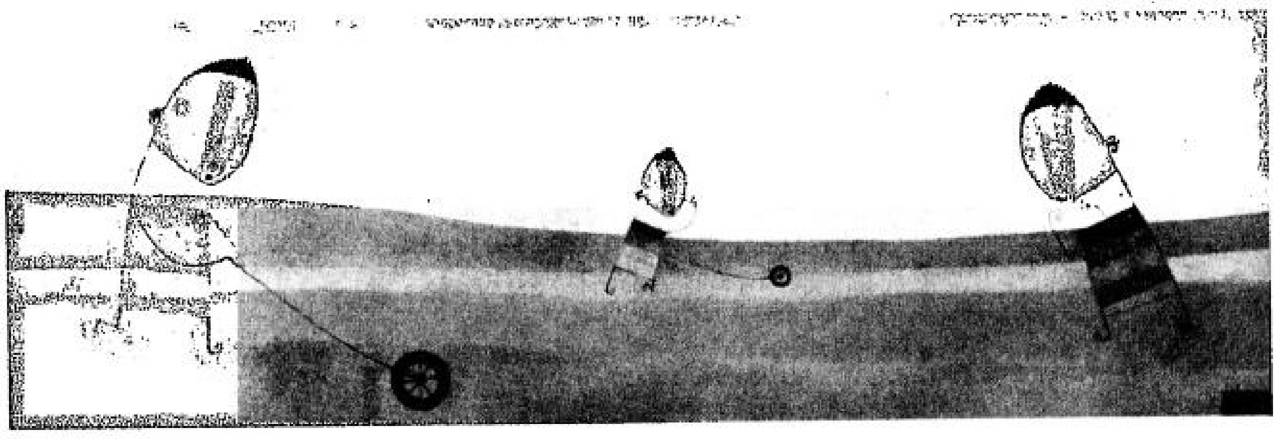
The collection includes renditions that stir enjoyable childhood memories such as street-plays with the simplest of toys and light moments of playful banter. The colors are light and sprightly.

The show runs June 28-July 12. Call 7520032 or 0920-9276436.



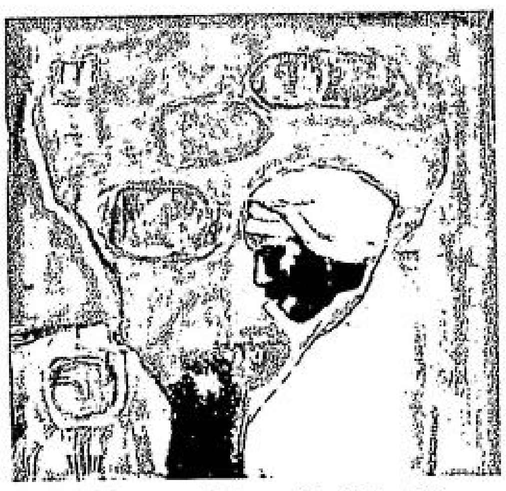


"MORNING Coffee"



"FELLOW Yellow" (above); "Roy's Roll" (left)

VISUAL ARTS



"WHY I Am not a Painter," by Tosha Albor

Tosha Albor at Avellana

On view until July 15 at the Avellana Art Gallery is Tosha Albor's "Why I Am not a Painter." Titled after a Frank O'Hara's poem, the exhibit explores the tentative journey of the artist into the indeterminate realm of abstracted line and color and how she, oscillating between the certainty of thought and gut-feel, comes up with an array of deeply evoked forms—airplanes, faces, layered presences—that dutifully marry experience with reflection. Avellana Art Gallery is at A-19, 2680 F.B. Harrison St. Pasay City (fronting Gideon Academy). Call 8338357.

Caasi at The Drawing Room

Ruel Caasi presents "Time Beyond Lines," until July 5, at The Drawing Room, G/F, Metrostar Bldg., 1007 Metropolitan Ave., Makati. The works explore ideas of time, the changing condition of mental experiences over periods while examining memories of the past. Call 8977877 or 8976990.

"TIME Beyond Lines," by Ruel Caasi

Aviado at Crucible

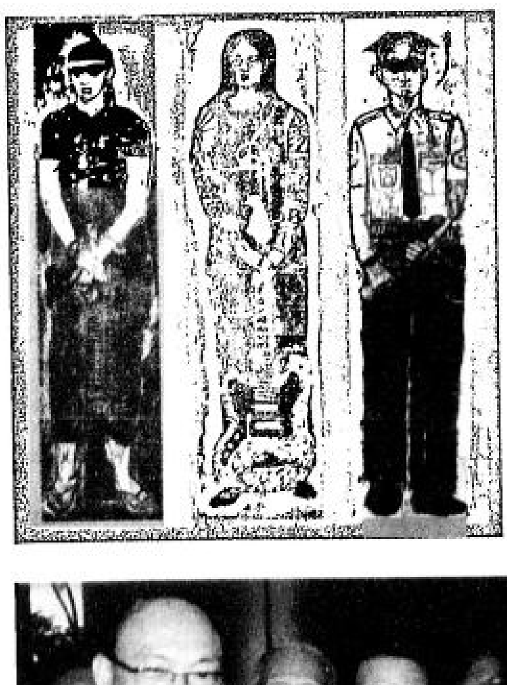
Virgilio "Pandy" Aviado will present original woodcut blocks and prints in "Archetypal Pinoy," June 27-July 9, at the Crucible Gallery, 4/F, Bldg. A, SM Megamall. Among the artworks that will be displayed are large woodcut prints used in ABS-CBN'S "Pinoy Big Brother Celebrity Edition" and from the exhibit "Analog Playground," shown at the Ateneo Art Gallery last December. The woodcut panels describe the artist's interpretation of the Filipino primitive and social icons. Call 6356061.

Batanes photos at SSS

SSS Gallery presents the photo exhibit "Amazing Batanes," until July 7. The exhibit features the picturesque Batanes landscape and seascape, as captured by the Federation of Philippine Photographers Foundation and SSS Photography Club. The SSS Gallery is at 2/F, SSS Bldg., East Ave., Diliman, QC. Call 9206401 loc. 5050, 5051 or 5052.

Group show at Duemila

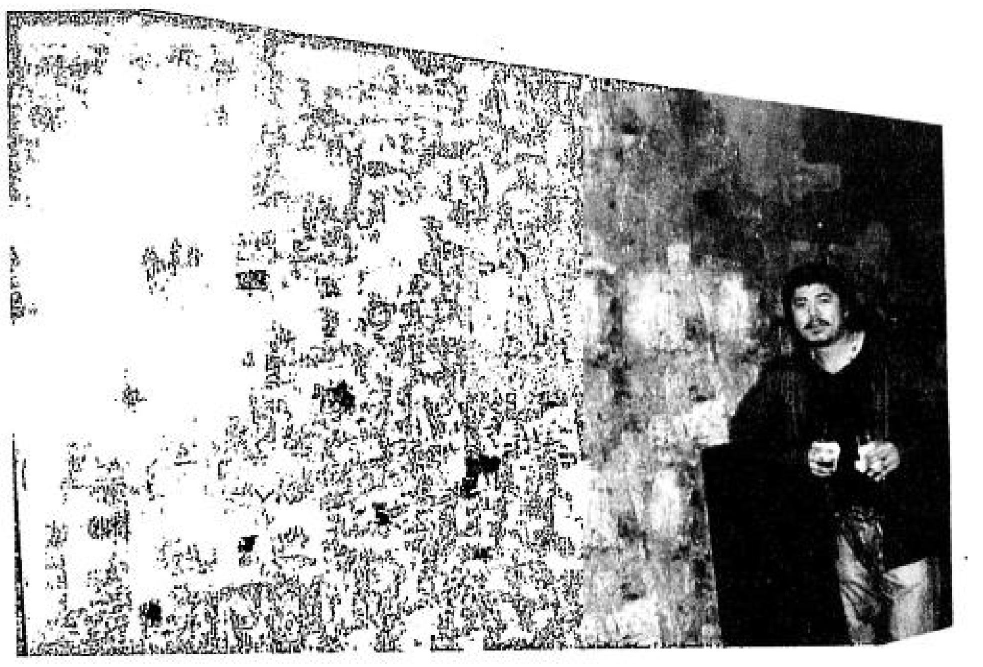
Eight contemporary artists—Gerardo Tan, Nilo Ilarde, R.M. De Leon, Juan Alcazaren, Juni Salvador, Ronald Achacoso, Jonathan Olazo and Reg Yuson—present "Specific Gravities 2," an exhibit of paintings and sculptures, July 1-29, at Galleria Duemila (210 Loring St., Pasay). Curators Nilo Ilarde and Ronald Achacoso suggest that the title describes the popular Archimedian incidence of deducing the inherent weight of material objects determined by the displacement of water in mind. The exhibition discusses individual investigations by artists in mid-career. Call 5345826.



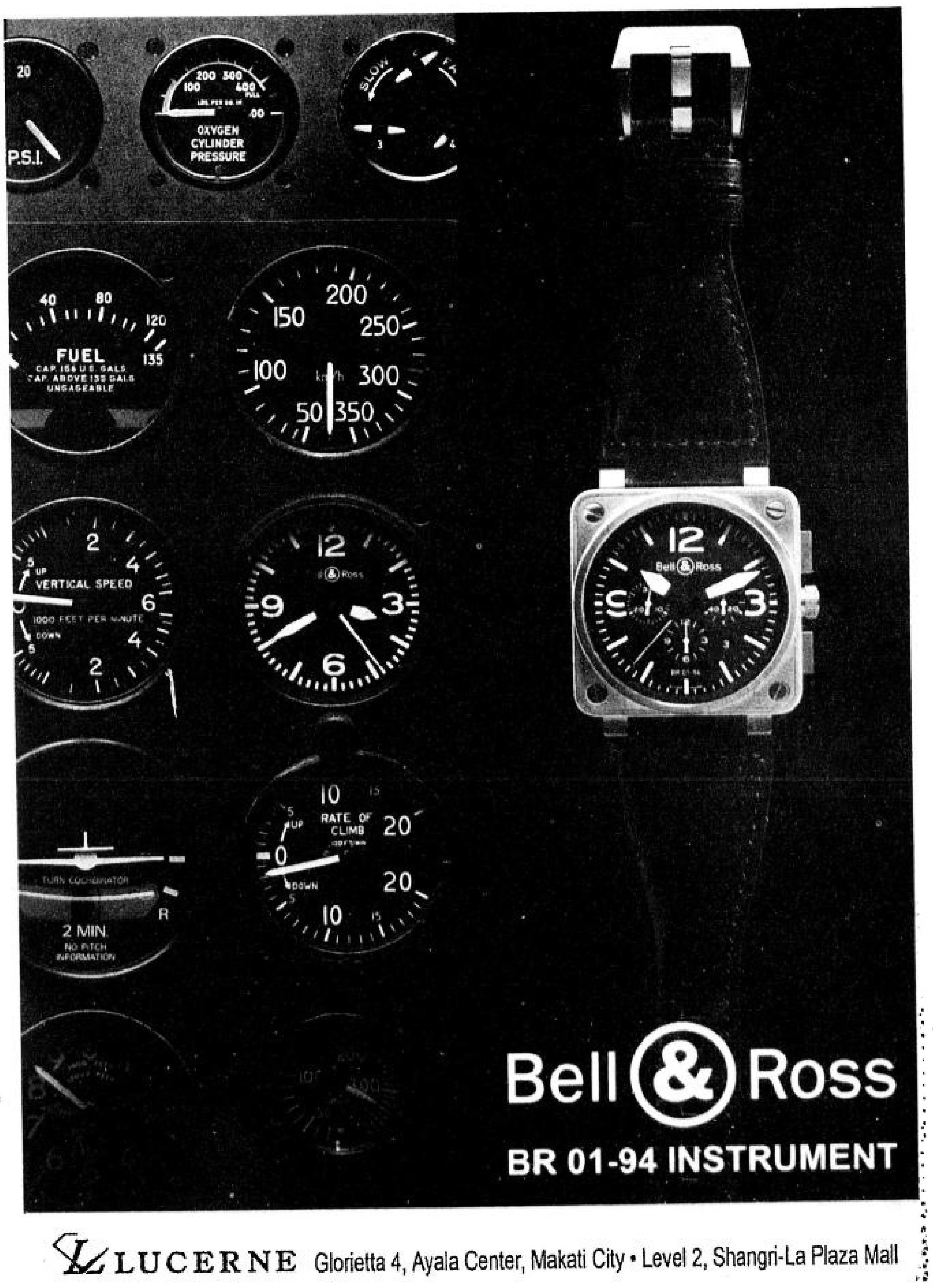
"ARCHETYPAL Pinoy," by Virgilio "Pandy" Aviado

Acuna at Old Swiss Inn

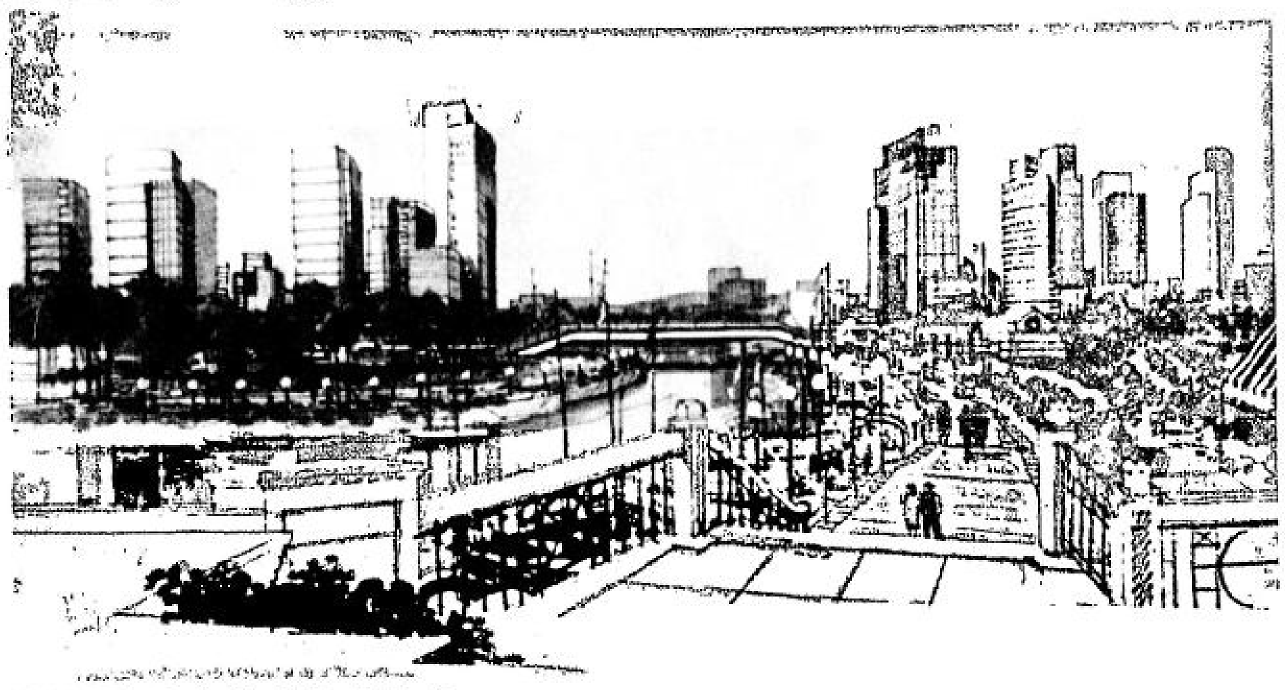
Abstract expressionist Ivan Acuna is holding a show in the newly opened branch of the Old Swiss Inn in Alabang (2/F BMW Autozentrum Lounge, Commerce and Madrigal Avenues, Ayala Alabang). His works have been compared to Willem de Kooning and Joan Miro and hang at the BMW offices in China, Malaysia and Singapore, as well as the Hyatt Hotels in Guam and Hong Kong. The show runs until June 30. Call 8092326.



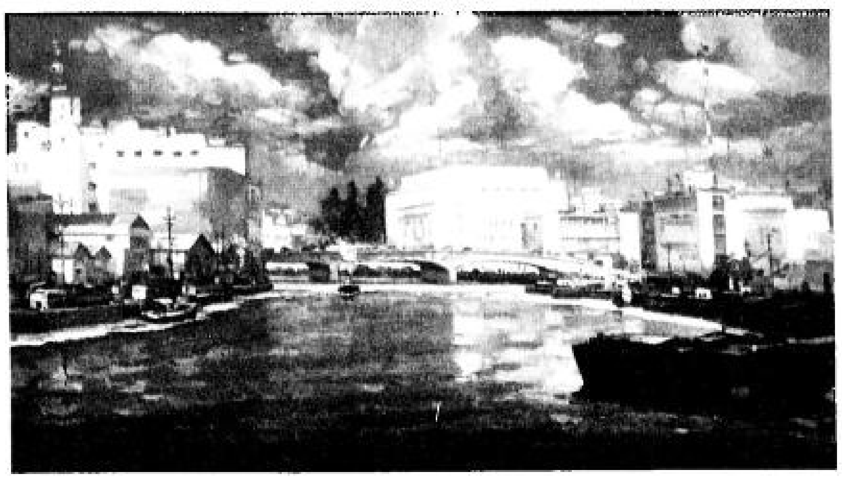
ROEL OBEMIO'S exhibit, "Circus of Life," runs at Le Soufflé in Power Plant, Rockwell. Formally opening the exhibit are Wilson Tieng and Celes Go, as well as Marlo Arisala, Buds Convocar, Mauro Malang, Bong Versoza and Coney Obemio. The show is presented by Choice Expression Gallery.



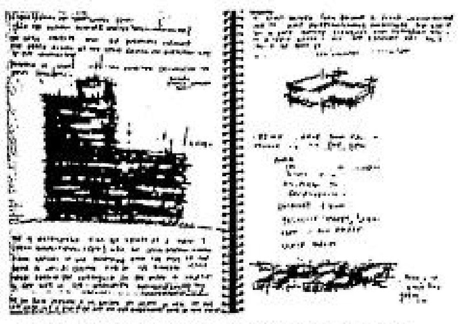
LUCERNE Glorietta 4, Ayala Center, Makati City • Level 2, Shangri-La Plaza Mall



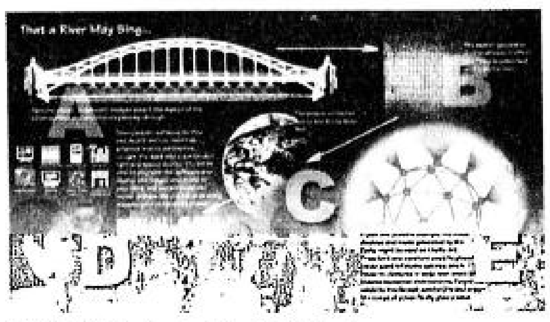
"PASIG Riverbanks," by Felino Palafox Jr.



"JONES Bridge," by Sofronio Y. Mendoza



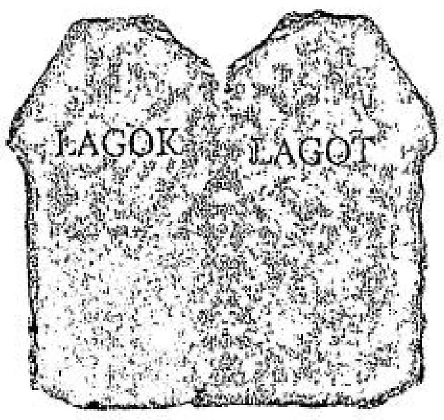
ARCHITECTURAL notes by Alfredo Aquilizan



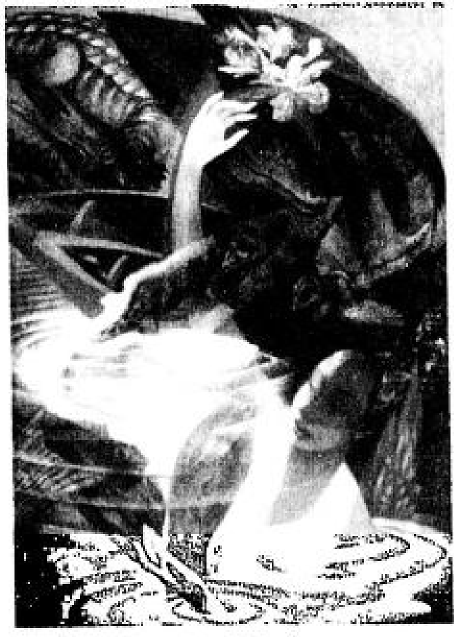
BRIDGE design by Mark Mallari

Shredded ode

From page C1



"LAGOK," by José Tence Ruiz



RIVER "diwata" by Fil Delacruz

tions from 20th-century Philippine art, from the prewar period to modernism in the 1950s, and to more recent works. The works include those by National Artists Fernando Amorsolo, Vicente Manansala, Napoleon Abueva, and Arturo Luz.

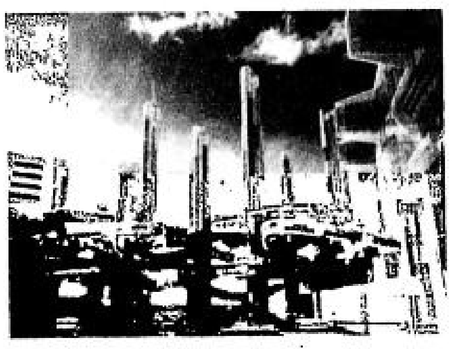
Other featured artists are Toribio Herrera, Alfredo Carmelo, Sofronio Y. Mendoza, Federico Aguilar Alcuaz, Romeo Ballada, Manuel Baldemor, Publio Briones, William Chua, Fil Delacruz, Carlos Florido, Valeria Cavestany, Horacio Gillego, Lilo Gutierrez, Edgardo Lantin, Tito Roy, Juvenal Sanso, Filemon Torres, Jose Valladolid, Lita Wells, Lor Calma, Julie Lluch, Ramon Orlina, Jose Tence Ruiz, Claude Tayag and Edwin Wilwayco.

Ego trip

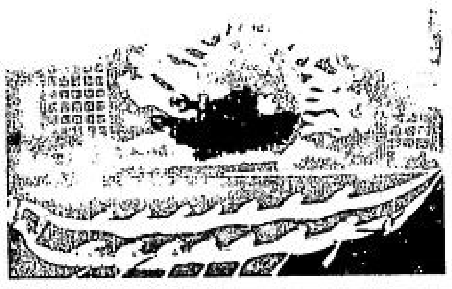
Paras-Perez, himself a top visual artist who has also contributed his interpretation of the Pasig to the exhibit, said that as editor of the book, he had wanted to be "constructive" and "creative" in offering visions of renewing the Pasig.

(Some of the architectural designs are on this page.)

Paras-Perez explained that bringing back the old glory of the Pasig should not mean nostalgia or romanticism. "Definitely you cannot revive the Pasig through ego trips," he said.



DESIGN by Ed Calma



ARTWORK by Rod. Paras-Perez

Paras-Perez further explained that a book should be judged by critics and readers, not left to the mercies of shredders and book-burners.

"What happened is nothing short of blasphemy," Paras-Perez lamented.

Throughout history, book-burning has been the practice of authoritarian leaders to suppress dissent or alternative views.

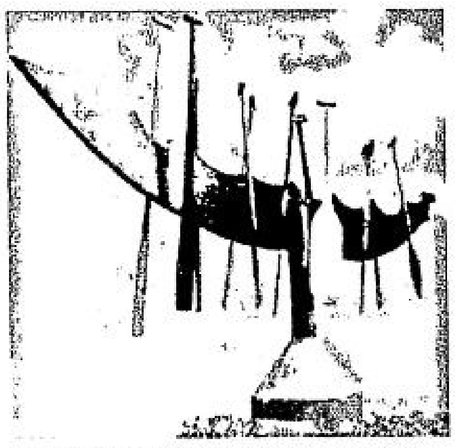
In fact, in ancient China, book-burning was often resorted to by totalitarian leaders against scholarship. "Burning books and killing scholars," according to historians, was the greatest crime of Quin Shi Huang in the second century before Christ.

In more contemporary history, book-burning and Adolf Hitler's genocidal Nazi regime—as well as Stalin's Gulag, Mao Tse Tung's Cultural Revolution, and Pol Pot's killing fields—have become synonymous.

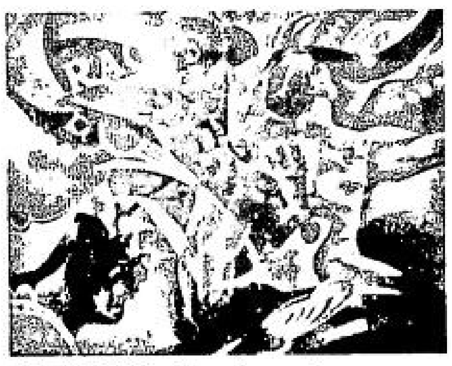
The last century's tragic experience with murderous authoritarian regimes was predicted by the German poet Heinrich Heine, who said in 1821: "Where they burn books, they will end in burning human beings."

In such a context, it is at least ironic that a book offering liquid architectural visions on how to revive a great river has been shredded and burned.

"Ode to the Pasig River" opens tonight at 6:30 at the ground-floor gallery of the Ayala Museum. The exhibit runs up to Aug. 27. Call 7577117 to 21.

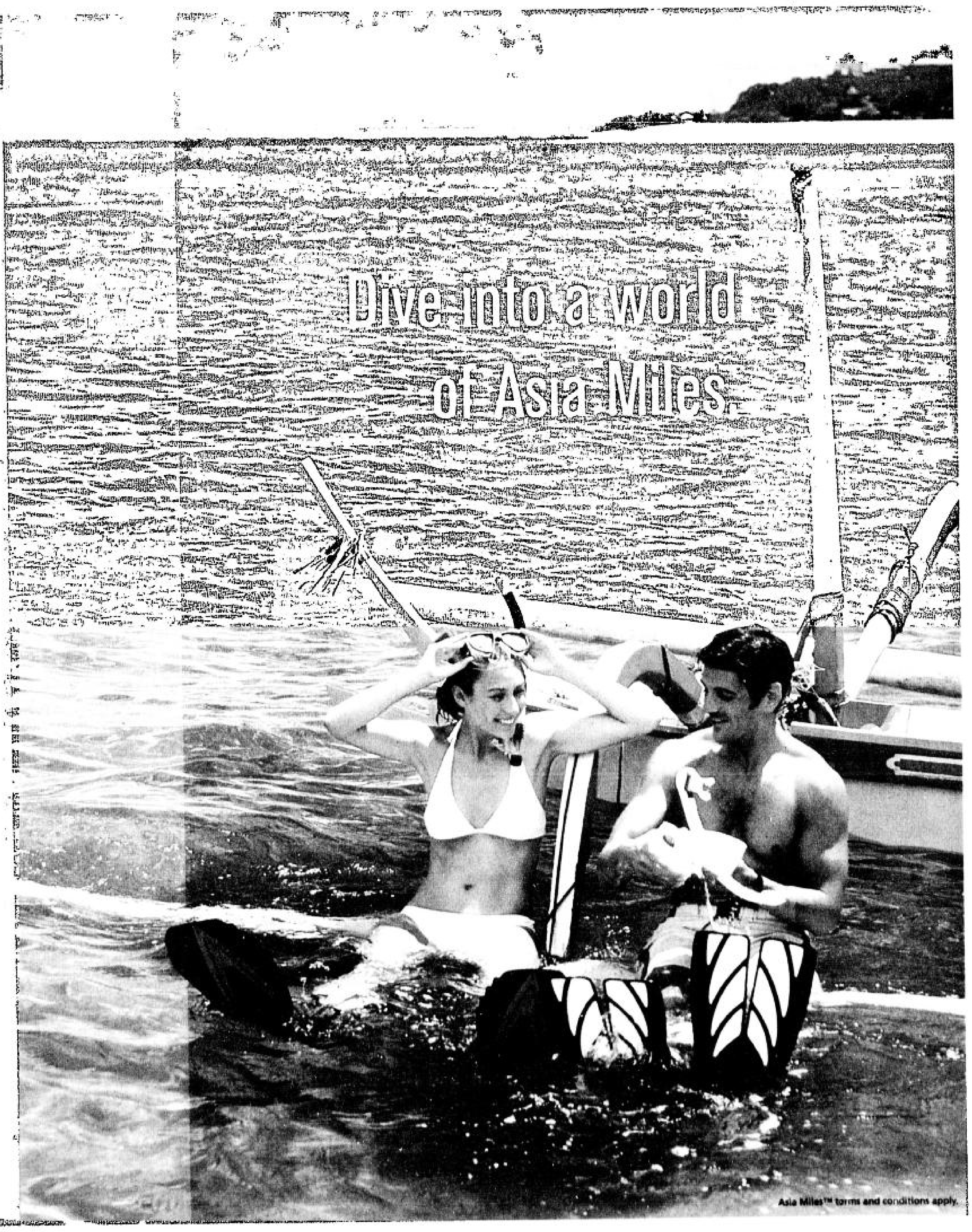


"ALLEGORICAL Paddle," by Napoleon Abueva



ARTWORK by Cesar Legaspi

Asia Miles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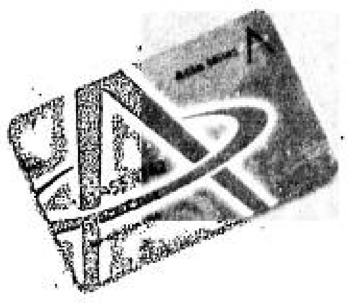

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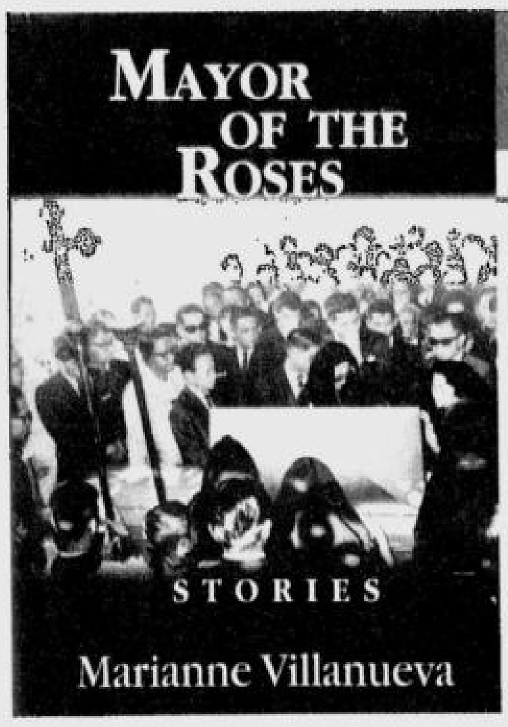
FIL-AM WRITER FICTIONALIZES CALAUAN INCIDENT

The elegance of heartbreak



By R. Zamora Linmark
Contributor

MARIANNE VILLANUEVA is one of the most important Filipino short-story writers working in the English language today. And her latest collection, "Mayor of the Roses" (Miami University Press), a follow-up to her much-lauded "Ginseng and Other Tales from Manila" (Calyx Books), strongly affirms that position.

Set in various Philippine and US cities, the 17 elegant stories in this collection revolve around desperate lives and broken homes oftentimes marked by dispossession and crazed longing.

REVIEW

In "Oaks," a husband tells his estranged wife that starting over means a new life without her, while in "Sutil," a family where of strangers assembles to bid farewell to the father of the house amid whispers and broken glass. In "Mayor of the Roses," a Filipina visits her former home, the Philippines, and becomes obsessed with the death of a beauty queen who was gang raped by seven men, including the town mayor and his nephew.

Characters recur throughout the collection. They hop from one story to another; ironically contrasting the book's interconnected structure with its themes of fragmentation and abandonment. "Oaks," for example, is the companion piece to the Vietnamese "Selena," a full-time flirt and the cause behind job terminations and bedroom quarrels. The reportage-style and period piece of "Extinction," about a turn-of-the-century arboreal expert and his encounters in the archipelago, echo the anthropological ventures of a photojournalist in post-war Benguet province in "Mountains." The children in the elegiac "Lenox Hill, December 1991," about a woman who chronicles the last days of her sister confined in a Manhattan hospital, reappear in the subsequent "Infected."

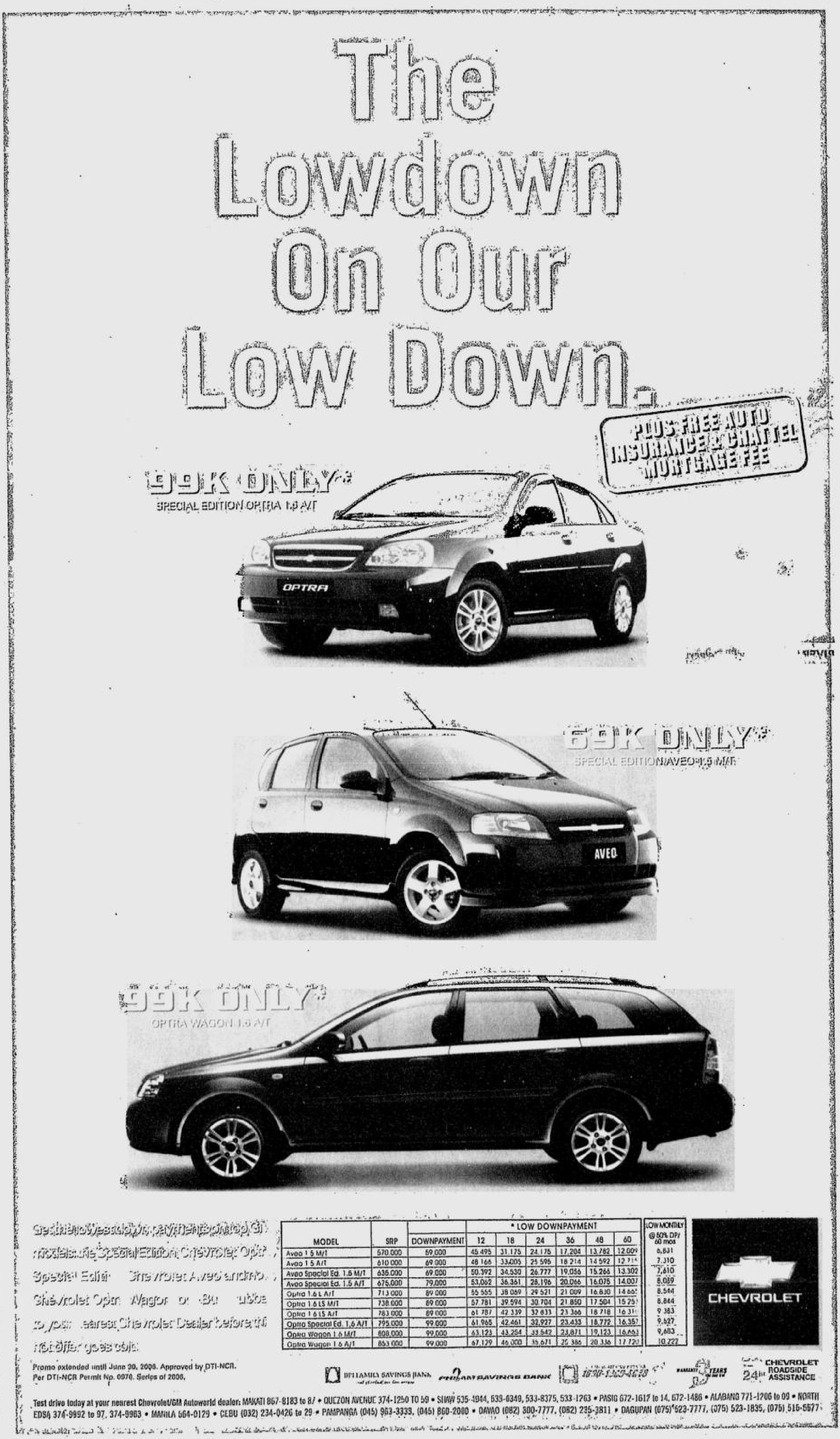
Hilarious

Humor seldom peppers the stories but when it does it's as hilarious as a Filipino housewife in America getting caught up in the drama of fictional characters of bad novels in "American Milk."

Perhaps what holds these stories together is the theme of home, or the absence of one. The narrators—or central characters, usually Filipina emigrants—are always turning to or looking back at home, the Philippines: their sanctuary as much as the source of their pain, disenchantment, ruptured identities and memory.

THE ELEGANCE/ D2

AUTHOR Marianne Villanueva



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Optra 1.6 LS M/T	738,000	89,000	57,781	39,594	30,704	21,850	17,504	15,25[illegible]	8,844
Optra 1.6 LS A/T	783,000	89,000	61,787	42,339	32,833	23,366	18,718	16,31[illegible]	9,383
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Optra Wagon 1.6 A/T	853,000	99,000	67,129	46,000	35,671	25,386	20,336	17,720	10,222

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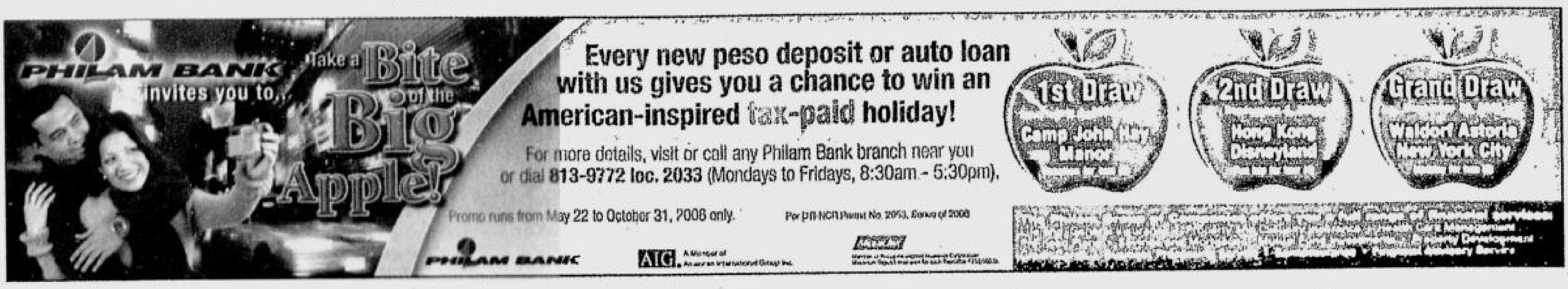

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Filipiniana reads

The Paranoid Traveler
101 tips to prepare for your trip
ELIZABETH P. ONG

'The Paranoid Traveler'

By Elizabeth P. Ong

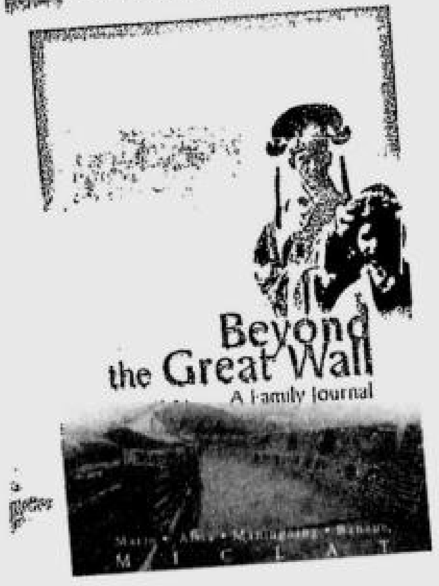
Most travel guides always tell you things to do, places to go and events to watch for. As helpful as they are, they seldom tell you what things you need to do, places to go and events to watch out for while you are still home preparing your trip. The 101 tips this book will share will help make it more likely that when you get to your destination, you enjoy the recommendations of those travel books. Nothing spoils a trip than the small irritants you could have avoided if you have been paranoid enough during your preparation.

WHY CHRIST?
David J. Carlson

'Why Christ?'

By David J. Carlson

This concise handbook provides powerful support for the truth of Christ by focusing on the discipline of Christian apologetics, the branch of theology concerned with the rational defense of the Christian world view.



'Beyond the Great Wall'

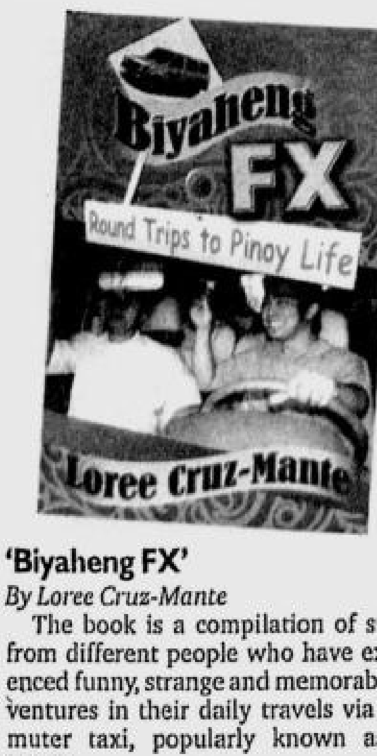
By Mario Miclat, Alma Miclat, Maningning Miclat and Banaue Miclat

The book is a selection of personal essays by a family of native Filipinos who lived in the shadow of the Great Wall of China for 15 years, from 1971-1986.

'Fallen Cradle: Parents on the Loss of a Child'

By Agnes Prieto and Ricardo M. de Ungria (editors)

The book is a sharing of a most painful journey—confronting and accepting the death of one's child.



'Biyaheng FX'

By Loree Cruz-Mante

The book is a compilation of stories from different people who have experienced funny, strange and memorable adventures in their daily travels via commuter taxi, popularly known as the "FX."

The books are available at selected National Book Store branches.

Tony award-winning drama goes to Cebu

FOLLOWING ITS SUCCESSFUL RUN IN Manila, "Doubt" will be staged in Cebu at Onstage! Ayala Center Cebu from June 30-July 1.

In her return to the stage after 20 years, movie and television star Cherie Gil plays the pivotal role of Sister Aloysius. Father Flynn will be played by Niccolo Manahan, with Jay Glorioso and Cathy Azanza rounding up the cast.

Set in the Bronx in 1964, "Doubt" tells the story of a high-school principal Sister Aloysius (Cherie Gil) who sets out to trap parish priest Father Flynn (Niccolo Manahan) whom he suspects of molesting one of the students.

Winner of the 2005 Pulitzer Prize for Best Drama and the 2005 Tony Award for Best Play, John Patrick Shanley's "Doubt" has been hailed as the most compelling and magnificently crafted piece of drama to hit the Broadway stage in years. It is still running at the Walter Kerr Theater on Broadway and this year alone, it is set to run in over 25 countries around the world including Taiwan, Japan, Chile, New Zealand, most of Europe and America.

Chari Arespacochaga directs this Philippine premiere production of "Doubt," produced by Atlantis Productions, and brought to Cebu by Hendri Go of Little Boy Productions for a limited engagement on June 30, July 1 and 2. Show schedules are Friday and Saturday at 8 p.m., with Saturday and Sunday matinees at 3 p.m. Ticket prices are P300, P400 and P600, with student discounts available.

Call 0917-8155794 or 2330452. E-mail kuyaig@yahoo.com

CHERIE Gil as Sister Aloysius and Niccolo Manahan as Father Flynn in "Doubt"

Jaime V. Ongpin journalism awards June 29

THE CENTER FOR MEDIA FREEDOM and Responsibility (CMFR), in cooperation with the Ateneo de Manila University, will announce the winners of the 17th annual Jaime V. Ongpin Awards for Excellence in Journalism (JVOAEJ) for works published in 2005 on June 29, at a program to be held at the Aim Conference Center Manila (Benavidez corner Trasierra Sts., Legaspi Village, Makati).

The awards ceremony will follow the Jaime V. Ongpin Journalism Seminar which starts at 9:30 a.m. As has been the practice since 1995, selected finalists participate in a panel discussion about their articles and take questions from the audience, especially journalism faculty and students.

As administrator of the awards, CMFR introduced an innovation for this year's selection. Reports published by daily newspapers are now judged separately from those published by nondailies. Thus, there are two sets of first, second and third prizes for investigative journalism and explanatory reporting.

In the explanatory category, five finalists from the dailies and six from non-dailies are competing for the top prizes; while in the investigative category, there are five and six, respectively.

The first-prize winner in each category will receive P70,000; the second-prize winner, P40,000; and the third, P20,000. Finalists will each receive P10,000.

Winners and finalists will receive a plaque.

Two of the four first-prize winners will receive a travel grant each. This is the 10th year that the Canadian Embassy will award the Marshall McLuhan Prize, a travel study tour of Canada, for the winner in the investigative category. And for the fourth time, the Australian Embassy will present the Australian Ambassador's Award, an observation tour of Australia, to the winner in the explanatory category.

CMFR will choose the recipients of the two travel study grants.

This year, the JVOAEJ is sponsored by The Asia Foundation with support from the United States Agency for International Development.

Finalists: Explanatory Category

Daily Division:

• "The economics of corruption"
D'Laarni A. Ortiz, Larissa Josephine C. Villa, Roulee Jane F. Calayag, Ehden Llave-Pelaez
(Noel G. Reyes, editor)
BusinessWorld
July 19, 2005

• "Philippine economic progress since 1988: The 'good old days'"
John Mangun
BusinessMirror
December 1-3, 2005

• "Electronic ears listen with bugs and taps"
Fil V. Elefante
The Manila Times
June 27-29, 2005

• "Graduating class: Education, labor mismatch"
Norman P. Aquino
BusinessWorld
March 10, 2005

• "Confrontation to cooperation? Labor-management relations evolve in globalization era"
Dave Llorito
BusinessMirror
November 2, 2005

Non-Daily:

• "Mutants on your plate"
Alan C. Robles
Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism
Published in i Report
January-March 2005

• "Focus on Filipino youth: Perils of generation sex"
Cheryl Chan
Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism
Published in i Report
September 2005

• "Broken promises"
Lala Rimando, Cathy Rose Garcia and Elena Torrijos
Newsbreak
January 31, 2005

• "Trained to care"
Avigail Olarte
Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism
Published in i Report
January-March 2005

• "Bataan nuke power plant: Still unused, still paying for it"
Lidy Nacpil and Mae Buenaventura
Philippine Graphic
March 14, 2005

• "Mama can't eat"
Vinia M. Datinguinoo
Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism
Published in i Report
January-March 2005

Investigative Category

Daily:

• "Bailout costs too much for deposit insurer"
Norman P. Aquino
BusinessWorld
Nov. 29-Dec. 1, 2005

• "Tracing the trail of the tape"
Fe Zamora and Gerry Lirio
Philippine Daily Inquirer
Sept. 17-18, 2005

• "Border dispute leaves Dumagats in quandary"
Fritz Dacpano
The Manila Times
April 25-26, 2005

• "Palawan's gas pains"
Jofelle Tesorio
Philippine Daily Inquirer
Jan. 13, 2005

• "CAP: From pre-need's poster boy to whipping boy"
Daxim L. Lucas and Elizabeth L. Sanchez
Philippine Daily Inquirer
Sept. 19-21, 2005

Non-Daily:

"So young and so *trapo*"
• Avigail Olarte
Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism
Published in i Report
September 2005

• "Running on taxpayers' money"
Luz Rimban
Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism
Published in i Report
September 2005

• "Guns and gold"
Gemma B. Bagayaua
Newsbreak
Dec. 5, 19, 2005 and Jan. 30

• "Major players elude government's anti-logging drive in Aurora"
Luz Rimban
Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism
Published in BusinessWorld, Cebu Daily News, Malaya, Philippine Daily Inquirer and Sun Star Daily on Jan. 31-Feb. 1, 2005

• "For land and wages"
Half a century of peasant struggle at Hacienda Luisita
Dabet Castañeda
Bulatlat.com
Published in Philippine Graphic on Jan. 3-10, 2005 and Jan. 17, 2005

• "Cheats Inc."
Miriam Grace A. Go
Newsbreak
Sept. 12, 2005

India-Philippines business book out

THE FIRST COMPREHENSIVE guidebook for doing business in India and Philippines is now out in the market. It was launched last June 5 by former President Fidel V. Ramos at Queens Crystal Garden Restaurant in Makati.

The "Philippines-India Business++ Guidebook" covers a wide-range scope of topics and provides important information for Filipinos who wish to do business in India, and for Indians who wish to invest in the Philippines.

The book includes a sector-by-sector overview of key industries and opportunities for business. Key sectors include the booming pharmaceuticals industry in both India and the Philippines, the fast-changing telecommunications sector, alternative fuels, entertainment.

Also included in the guidebook are essential legal information such as labor laws in both countries, rules on foreign direct investments, import/export restrictions and other legal information crucial to a successful venture in both countries.

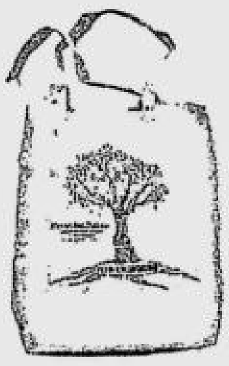
The book also discusses the phenomenon of the overseas-based Indians and the Philippines' OFWs, and the nuances between the two cultures. A roundup of practical information is included in the guidebook including directories of hotels and restaurants, and contact information of key government offices and trade associations.

The book is published by Popular Publishing House and edited by Filipino-Indian businessman and immediate past president of the Filipino-Indian Chamber of Commerce, Vishnu Hathiramani.

The book is available in most Indian establishments and select bookstores in the Philippines and in India. In the Philippines, the book is sold for P1,000. Call 7470597, text 0917-8318455, or e-mail vishnu@zpdee.net

FORMER Sen. Leticia Shahani, former President Fidel V. Ramos, and editor and publisher Vishnu Hathiramani.

Nature bag from bookstore



POWERBOOKS INtroduces its environment-friendly Pages for Nature Bag, made of canvas material and available for only P299. For every bag purchase, P150 will go to WWF-Philippines. Also, each time the bag is used when shopping at Powerbooks, you can avail of a five-percent discount on books, and an additional P5 will be donated to WWF-Philippines. Read, recycle and save the environment. The Pages for Nature campaign will run until Dec. 31.

PowerBooks has branches at Greenbelt 4 (tel. 7576428-29), SM Megamall (6352898-99), Alabang Town Center (8505662-63), Glorietta 3 (7527075), Shangri-La (6380023/25), Robinsons Place Ermita (5233334/5243448) and SM Mall of Asia (5560244).

The elegance of heartbreak

From page D1

As the narrator in "Mayor of the Roses" says, "Sometimes, because I'd lived apart so long, I couldn't quite be sure of who I was. There were letters, of course, letters from back home. The letters told me nothing of who I was or who I had been. They were always filled with details of birthday parties, weddings, births and funerals. None of these occasions affected me personally."

Haunting and heartbreaking, these stories, written in a terse prose, conclude that, regardless of geographical boundaries or cultural differences, love and loss are the same, and the violence that at times accompanies them is almost always amplified by silence. Deliberately, they hurt and shun each other with passion. And are quick to remind that what was once there—home, family, history—can only be reclaimed by a memory that, when it is not being cancelled out, is thrust under scrutiny.

Such contradictory and complex worlds from a writer Jessica Hagedorn has lauded as "a gifted storyteller with an unflinching eye."

Marianne Villanueva will have a talk, "Mother's Daughter," at the University of Santo Tomas Faculty of Arts and Letters on June 29, at 10 a.m. The public is invited.

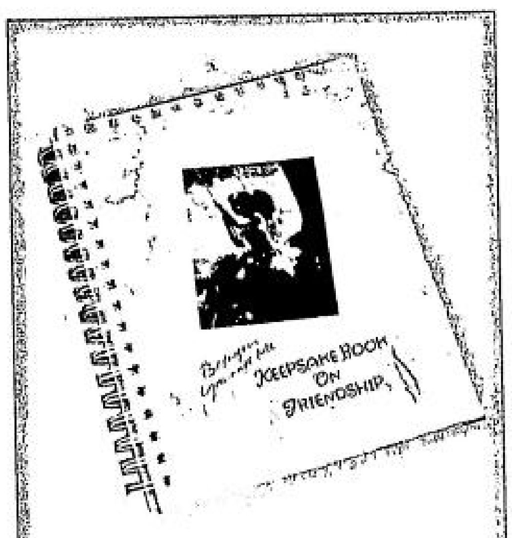
Lecture on 'erotics of American empire'

KRITIKA KULTURA OF ATENEO DE MANILA University Loyola Schools, together with Artery Manila, will hold a lecture by writer Nerisa Balce on "Filipina's Breast: Savagery, Docility and the Erotics of American Empire," on June 30, at 4 p.m., at the Natividad Fajardo conference room at the H. de la Costa Building of Ateneo.

The lecture examines the image of the Filipina savage after 1898 as an American imperial artifact. A central concern of the lecture is a genealogy of the "erotics of the American empire" through early 20th-century American photographs of Filipina women. The lecture concludes with the electronic image of the Filipina in cyberspace. The lecture will be published in a special issue of Social Text, a journal of Duke University, to pay tribute to the late Edward Said.

Balce received her Ph.D. in Ethnic Studies at the University of California-Berkeley. She is an assistant professor of Comparative Literature at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst.

At University of Massachusetts-Amherst, Balce teaches undergraduate courses on Asian American literature and film, gender, race and US popular culture. She also teaches graduate seminars on postcolonial theory, American Orientalism and the cultures of the Philippines in 1898.



HALLMARK'S "Between You and Me Keepsake Book on Friendship" allows you to compile the story of your friendships through pictures, mementos, quotable quotes and anecdotes. It is distributed by Filstar Distributors Corp. and is available at National Book Store.

Condo living in Metro Home; designer gowns in Weddings

THE LATEST ISSUE OF Metro Home & Entertaining focuses on condo living, such as the cover story on interior designer Ana Rocha's model conversion of 40 square meters of floor area into a cool space of elegant urban living.

Other articles include a look at the evolution of vintage houses, such as the former residence of National Artist Arturo Luz under its present occupant, celebrity chef and restaurateur Margarita Fores.

In the garden section, readers will find an enlightening survey of Japanese garden design side by side with an eye-opening visit to the Makiling Botanic Gardens.

Handy tips on how to host the perfect cocktail party, from the choice of caterer to the design of the invitation, can be found in the entertaining section.

Theme weddings

On the latest issue of Metro Weddings, brides get a special treat with a first-time collection of sketches of over 60 wedding gowns from Manila's top designers, including Rajo Laurel, Randy Ortiz, Auggie Cordero, Ben Farrales, Pitoy Moreno, Jojie Lloren, and Dennis Lustico.

With gorgeous bride Mika Lagdameo on the cover, the new issue features wedding gown designs in every style and silhouette, made exclusively for the magazine. Readers can simply tear out the designs they want and bring them to the designers.

The issue also focuses on wedding themes. There are over 273 ideas and tips on how couples can create their own tasteful theme weddings--whether they're going for elegant (you can do it with lace), relaxed garden (think Tuscany), old world (something blue) or Chinese (rich with culture).

Also featured are the works of top florists, cake artists, and invitation specialists as well as new takes on giveaways.

Know more about the latest bridal showrooms, tips on great out-of-town receptions, listing of Manila's top florists, expanded suppliers directory and ways to personalize your wedding.

Metro Home & Entertaining and Metro Weddings are large-format glossy magazines now available at book stores and magazine outlets nationwide.

METRO
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CONDO STYLE
Cozy, chic and one-of-a-kind
How to make rooms double function
Condo-perfect furniture
How to individualize your unit
BEST VINTAGE

"Wheat-A-Minute, This is Wheat?"

Practically all Filipinos are wheat consumers. Some may challenge that fact but *wheat-a-minute* and think! For the longest time, Filipinos have had a longstanding love affair with *pan de sal* and *ispaghetti*, which uses wheat as the main core ingredient. Wheat has come into the lives of the Filipinos; from breakfast to lunch, to snacks and dinner, and contributes to a significant amount of the Pinoy's daily food intake.

What then are commonly eaten wheat-based foods of Filipinos? U.S. Wheat Associates, the private, non-profit U.S. organization, which represents the American wheat farmers and is the U.S. wheat industry's export market development organization, shares these facts on what exactly wheat-based foods are.

Bread: The core ingredient in making and baking bread is flour - wheat flour to be exact. Wheat flour is the framework for almost every baked product. Hard red spring and hard red winter wheat are the varieties that are milled into flour and used for our everyday bread, *pan de sal*. Aside from *pan de sal*, other common types of bread are the white loaf bread and the whole wheat loaf bread.

Whole wheat bread is the kind that is preferred by the more health-conscious consumers. Whole wheat is less refined and less processed. This means that it stays in its healthiest and most nutritious form where nutrients such as niacin and protein remain. Loaf bread or what is commonly known as white bread or "*tasty*," found in most neighborhood bakeries and sari-sari stores, is also made of wheat. Hard wheat is the ideal ingredient to produce the best tasting and nutritious pan de sal, white bread and whole wheat bread, as this variety of wheat is higher in protein and gluten, which provides the ideal consistency for these well-loved products.

Pastries: Soft white wheat is the ideal base ingredient for pastries, cakes, cookies, donuts and muffins that Filipinos of all ages enjoy. The discerning baker uses cake flour when preparing these sumptuous treats. Cake flour is fine-textured, silky flour milled from soft wheats with low protein content. Soft wheat is ideal for cakes, cookies and some pastries as it has a greater percentage of starch, which keeps cakes and pastries tender and delicate For some specialty pastries, pastry flour is the ideal base-ingredient as it has a finer texture and produces a lighter consistency for the perfect finished products.

Pasta and Noodles: Processed pasta like macaroni and spaghetti are made through a mixture of water and semolina, the coarsely ground endosperm (the meat of the wheat kernel where most of the nutrients are stored) of durum wheat. These ready-made pastas work well with chunky, complex sauces because its sturdy texture holds its own against the variety of textures the meat or vegetables bring to a dish.

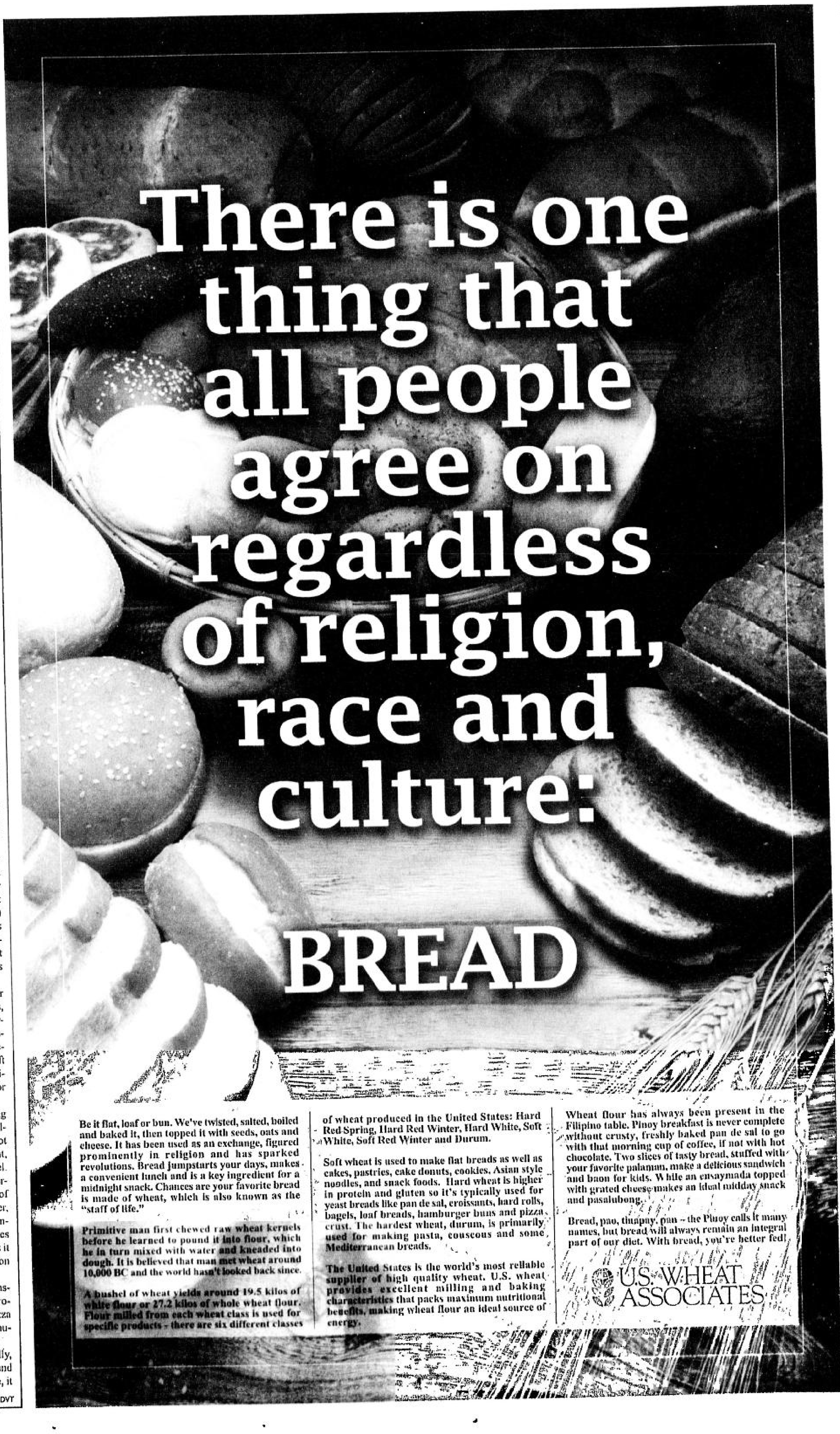
Homemade "fresh" pasta on the other hand, has a great capacity to absorb sauces, and so it is best suited for brothy, and butter- or cream-based sauces. The best "fresh" pastas are light, delicate and less chewy than factory-made pasta, because only eggs and soft wheat flour are used. The only other ingredient that may be added is Swiss chard or spinach to achieve green pasta.

Cereals: Cereals that come in varying forms and flavors is another well-loved Filipino breakfast alternative. What many do not know is that cereals are made of wheat, specifically the bran of the wheat kernel. Bran is the outer covering of the wheat kernel, which comprises about 14 ½ percent of the kernel. It is a good source for dietary fiber, protein, Vitamin E and B, minerals, and antioxidants. Bran's dietary fiber content makes it ideal for consumption during breakfast as it aids in digestion and prevents constipation throughout the day.

Aside from bread, pasta, cakes and pastries, and cereals, wheat is also used to produce one's favorite crackers, tortillas, pizza crusts, rolls, and many more delicious and nutritious products.

Even as wheat is not grown locally, "wheat-a-minute" dear Pinoys, there's bound to be a wheat-based product on every table, it just isn't noticed!

ADVT


There is one thing that all people agree on regardless of religion, race and culture:
BREAD

Be it flat, loaf or bun. We've twisted, salted, boiled and baked it, then topped it with seeds, oats and cheese. It has been used as an exchange, figured prominently in religion and has sparked revolutions. Bread jumpstarts your days, makes a convenient lunch and is a key ingredient for a midnight snack. Chances are your favorite bread is made of wheat, which is also known as the "staff of life."

Primitive man first chewed raw wheat kernels before he learned to pound it into flour, which he in turn mixed with water and kneaded into dough. It is believed that man met wheat around 10,000 BC and the world hasn't looked back since.

A bushel of wheat yields around 19.5 kilos of white flour or 27.2 kilos of whole wheat flour. Flour milled from each wheat class is used for specific products - there are six different classes of wheat produced in the United States: Hard Red Spring, Hard Red Winter, Hard White, Soft White, Soft Red Winter and Durum.

Soft wheat is used to make flat breads as well as cakes, pastries, cake donuts, cookies, Asian style noodles, and snack foods. Hard wheat is higher in protein and gluten so it's typically used for yeast breads like pan de sal, croissants, hard rolls, bagels, loaf breads, hamburger buns and pizza crust. The hardest wheat, durum, is primarily used for making pasta, couscous and some Mediterranean breads.

The United States is the world's most reliable supplier of high quality wheat. U.S. wheat provides excellent milling and baking characteristics that packs maximum nutritional benefits, making wheat flour an ideal source of energy.

Wheat flour has always been present in the Filipino table. Pinoy breakfast is never complete without crusty, freshly baked pan de sal to go with that morning cup of coffee, if not with hot chocolate. Two slices of tasty bread, stuffed with your favorite palaman, make a delicious sandwich and baon for kids. While an ensaymada topped with grated cheese makes an ideal midday snack and pasalubong.

Bread, pao, tinapay, pan -- the Pinoy calls it many names, but bread will always remain an integral part of our diet. With bread, you're better fed!

U.S. WHEAT ASSOCIATES

New Zealand opens its doors to Pinoy students

By Cora Llamas
Contributor

UNIVERSAL College of Learning building

NOT TOO LONG AGO, INTERNATIONAL students who finished their degree in New Zealand and wanted to work and live in the country had to return home first after the expiration of their visas, and then go through the arduous process (usually one to two years) of compiling papers and undergoing a rigorous assessment for a working or permanent visa.

But immigration laws have now been relaxed a bit to allow foreign graduates of New Zealand schools to seek employment and process their working papers within six months after graduation. They don't even need a job offer (although that would help tremendously) to apply for a work visa.

"It is a six-month window of opportunity," says Felix Cleofas, general manager of the New Aussie Educational Consultancy Services (NAECS) which, for the past four years, has been sending students to one of the most sought-after countries of would-be immigrants.

This should be welcome news to Filipinos thinking of New Zealand, with its low crime rate, healthy economy, growing industries, and comfortable, stress-free living, as the next promised land. But it is not easy to get the New Zealand Immigration to consider inviting an interested foreign national to apply for a permanent residence visa.

Still, according to the Immigration New Zealand website (www.immigration.govt.nz), in a recent selection, Filipinos ranked fourth among those granted the most entry at 11.2 percent. Applicants from mother country Great Britain unsurprisingly ranked first at 23.6 percent, followed by China at 19.1 percent and a cluster of other countries at 16.8 percent. Trailing the Philippines were India (7.8 percent), South Africa (6.1 percent), USA (4.9 percent), the Fiji Islands (3.7 percent), Malaysia (2.4 percent), Canada (1.8 percent), Germany (1.3 percent), and Japan (1.3 percent).

> NZ's immigration laws have been relaxed to allow foreign graduates from its schools to seek employment and process their working papers there

Booming industries

The standards may be stringent, but the nation with a land mass similar to Japan's and the United Kingdom's and a small population of 4.2 million needs skilled, educated workers for its booming industries.

Bruce Osborne, director of International Business of the Universal College of Learning (UCOL) says, "There are hundreds of job vacancies but not many people to fill them all. [What we are looking for] is not low-skilled labor, but computer literate, highly skilled, creative-trades people who can do the stuff."

NEW ZEALAND educators Baker, Ridley, Osborne

Actively supporting the search is the education sector, with New Zealand's eight universities and 20 institutes of technology (also known as polytechnic) in sync with the businesses in their respective communities.

UCOL has two iconic programs: nursing and computer graphic design, the latter supporting "3-D modeling and animation, and a large film industry." It also graduates people in television, print, and multimedia industries.

Jim Baker, program manager of Northland Polytechnic says, "We have courses in agriculture, forestry, marine construction and boat-building. We put [our students] in apprenticeships in local industries."

Universities offer two to three-year degree programs, while polytechnics offer skill-based diplomas and certificates. Osborne compares the two: "Their standard and quality are the same; they have the same procedures to get the curriculum that is benchmarked internationally. [But] universities are research-focused predominantly while the more vocationally oriented polytechnics work closely with industry and commerce to produce job-ready graduates."

Rae Ridley of the Wellington Institute of Technology estimates that there are 300 Filipino students in New Zealand. Most students come from China, Japan, Korea, Thailand, Malaysia, India, Germany and Russia.

A one- to three-year degree course can cost at least NZ$13,000 in tuition fees alone, a small fortune by Philippine standards.

Research scholarships

Recently, to attract the kind of talent they want who might not be able to afford the cost of education, New Zealand initiated the International Doctoral Research Scholarships for foreign students. A successful applicant will get a full-time three-year study grant for a doctoral degree in a New Zealand university. The grant includes accommodations and allowances for living expenses, health, travel and books.

Eligible are citizens from designated nations (the Philippines included), with high academic standing, high English-language test scores certified by a recognized body such as IELTS, and approved research proposals by the New Zealand university that an applicant had contacted. An applicant for the scholarship must not hold nor apply for a visa for New Zealand permanent residency.

The scholarship program began in 2004 and, according to its guidebook, "over the next two years… will be expanded progressively and renamed. From 2007, up to 100 doctoral and undergraduate students will be studying under the program." Deadline for sending of application for the 2007 schoolyear is July 17, 5 p.m., New Zealand time. (The Philippines is behind New Zealand by four hours.)

Before leaving the Philippines, former New Zealand Ambassador Robert Carey-Moore said two Filipinos were awarded the scholarship in 2004.

The cultural and information transfer has been going on for some time. To consistently maintain the quality of education, Osborne says he and his colleagues "constantly enlist in bringing academics from overseas to moderate the programs under our care. In our institution, they come in as consultants and moderators for their specific areas of expertise, to assist our students and to report back against that to what they understand are the levels are in their own country."

These "academics from overseas" come from the US, UK, Europe and Australia. The Philippines recently made the roster with a memorandum of agreement on exchange of information and teacher/student training between UCOL and the School of Arts and Design of De La Salle-College of St. Benilde. Cleofas says that New Zealand Prime Minister Helen Clark herself was a guest during the signing of the agreement.

For info about NZ education, call NAECS at 9364494 or the New Zealand Trade and Enterprise at 8914625. For info about the NZ International Doctoral Scholarships, call Steve McCombie of the New Zealand Embassy at 8915356 or click on www.newzealandeducated.com/scholarships/page1.html.

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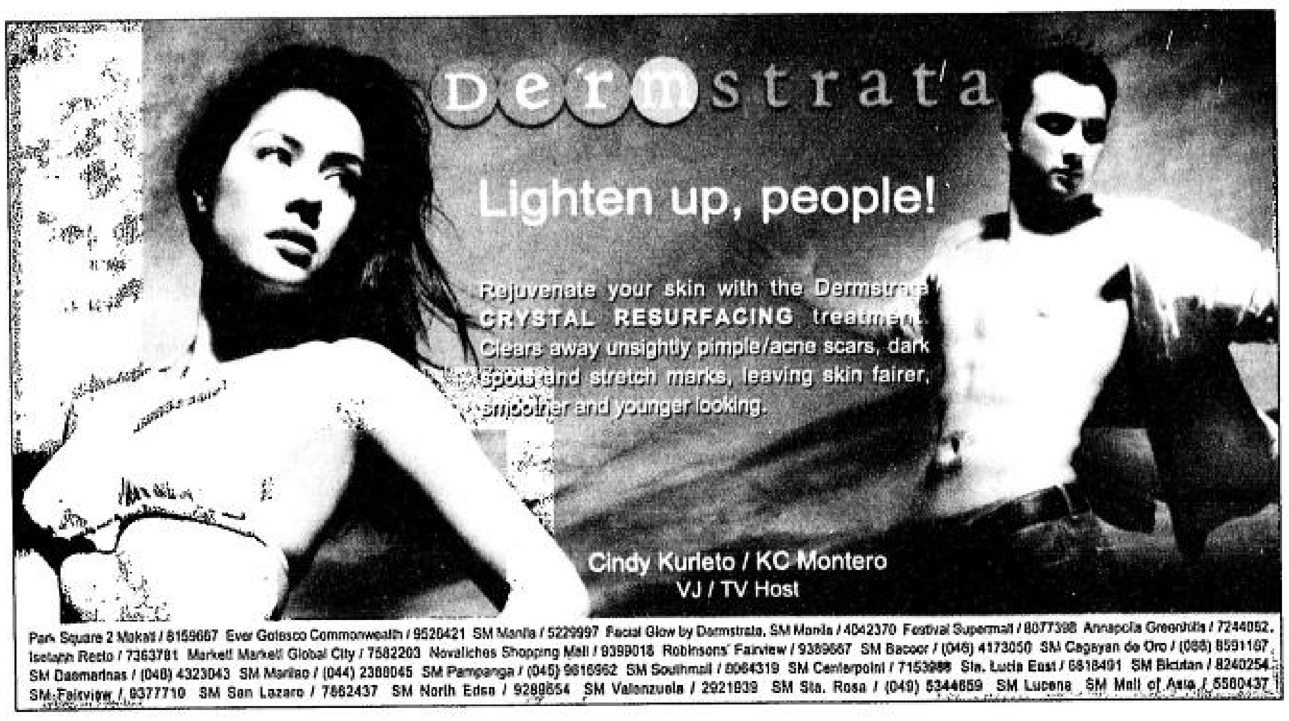
LIFESTYLE

DJS Latrama (Spain), Moyma (UK) and Krist (Indonesia) spin together at Tango, a popular dance club in Beijing.

Music and art 'mix' in Beijing

STORY ON PAGE E3

DJs from Asia and Europe share secrets of the trade and talk about the migration of the DJ culture in 'I'mPulse Beijing'



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Night of the patriots

By Gibbs Cadiz

WHEN, IN THE MIDDLE OF A concert-cum-piece of theater celebrating the country's Independence Day, you find yourself shedding copious tears against your better judgment, you know your buttons have been pushed with much skill. But you also know this is a good night as any to let down your guard—a communal gathering to articulate years of crushed dreams and undying hope for the country you love and rue in equal measure.

So there you are, wrapped in the flag for two hours and loving the warm, syrupy feel of it. By the program's close, with your patriotic impulses considerably plucked, you leap to your feet and join the throng in singing a lusty "Lupang Hinirang"—perhaps the lustiest you've ever sang it since your unblinkered childhood years.

This was the scene for us at "Hinabing Gunita," the grand Independence Day *asalto* organized by the Department of Tourism and the Cultural Center of the Philippines and recently held at the Cultural Center of the Philippines. It was a night of unabashed flag-waving and breast-beating (mostly metaphorical, thank God), but it had the good sense to stave off the expected heavy-handedness with a bright, visually fluid show that featured great singing and dancing, plus a magnificent set by Gino Gonzales.

JULIA Abueva and Dulce in a duet

Gonzales' creation, like a portal to and from another world, disgorged on its descending ramp the likes of Grace Nono, who sang and wailed through "Noong Unang Panahon" and "Sa Ugoy ng Duyan" like a tribal *babaylan*, as the Ramon Obusan Folkloric Group formed and reformed various tableaux illustrating the civilized, neighborly nature of our pre-Hispanic past.

The script, by Floy Quintos, had a simple aim. It took a number of classic and contemporary Filipino songs and attempted to recontextualize them, give them a new spin by using them as the soundtrack to the nation's unfolding history.

Thus, in the most moving part of the show, two songs by Wency Cornejo, "Hanggang" and "Habang May Buhay," became hymns not to unfettered romantic love, but to a nation's long and bloody struggle for freedom and well-being.

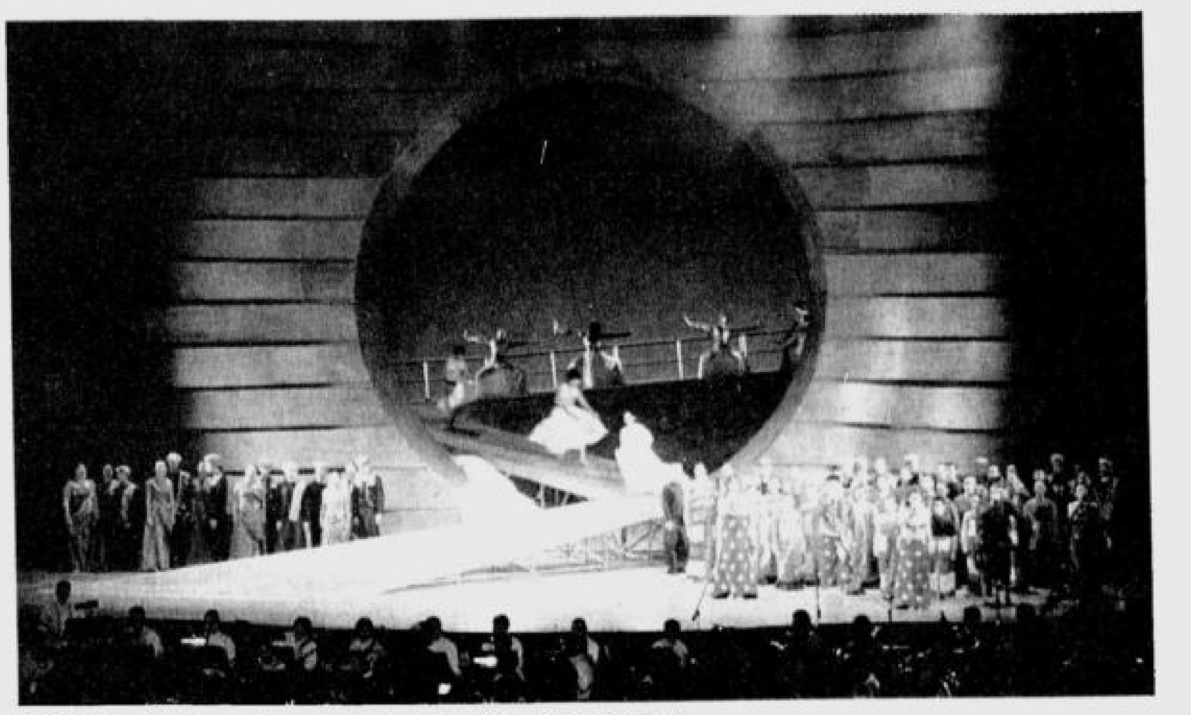
As Gerald Santos and Jed Madela sang these songs (beautifully), three women in the background acted out the sewing of the first Philippine flag. As their hands reverently caressed the cloth, the songs' plaintive promises of dutifulness and fidelity acquired heart-tugging new meanings:

"Giliw, 'wag mo sanang isiping
Ikaw ay aking lilisanin,
'Di ko magagawang lumayo sa'yong piling
At nais kong malaman mo
Kung gaano kita kamahal..."

In Act II's "Bakit Nga Ba Ganyan" suite, José Rizal (played with customary intensity and élan by Nonie Buencamino) verbalized his famous "Nasaan kayo, mga kabataan?" plea from "El Filibusterismo," a document that presciently predicted the sense of drift and instability a nation's young would feel without the anchorage of its past.

Then, Chito Ilacad's words in "Kapalaran," sang by the sweet-voiced Reuben Laurente who played a modern Pinoy to Buencamino's Rizal, gave more contemporary shadings to the national hero's bittersweet observations:

"Bakit ba ganyan
ang buhay ng tao
Mayro'ng mayaman,
may api sa mundo
Kapalaran kung hanapin,
'Di matagpuan
At kung minsa'y lumalapit
nang 'di mo alam"


GINO Gonzales' magnificent set design for "Hinabing Gunita"

Winning rendition

Sometimes, these juxtapositions didn't work, and their seams showed.

The Company, always a stalwart presence in concerts like this, did a winning rendition of "Ganyan Talaga Kaming Mga Pinoy," a catalogue of quintessential tics and habits that defined everyday Filipino experience (*"Si Jun-jun, si Mac-mac... Si Vhong at Vhennie... Ang sofang me plastic... Pasko sa aming bayan, Setyembre umpisa niyan"*).

But in "Itutuloy," where the five-member vocal group came out in costumes suggesting the breadth of the various professions that converged for the Edsa revolution, the cliched images were too much for the song to bear. Please, no more of this "*madre, pare, sundalo*, nurse, metro aide" grade-school visual aids, or at least until we've figured out how to celebrate Edsa properly.

In another arresting vignette, Bituin Escalante performed a commanding "Sino ang Baliw," riffing on the slower, more meditative Kuh Ledesma arrangement and turning the song into a virtual interrogation.

Is sticking to a country as self-destructive as ours an act of madness? Or is that proof of our basic sanity? As Escalante drove the song to its finish, a scrim descended on the stage, and various newspaper headlines flashed one after the other. Crime, corruption and lawlessness, but also triumph and kindness and humor and dignity—all somehow reassuring in their very constancy.

Providing the music was the Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra, with Chino Toledo conducting. Nanette Inventor and May Bayot also had solo vocal parts, while the UE Chorale, Ballet Philippines, Tribu Kahilwayan of Iloilo, and the Tanghalang Pilipino Actors' Company lent solid support.

A standout was tiny Julia Abueva, who sang a duet with the formidable Dulce and came out a winner with her precocious poise and pipes. Later on, after breathing new life to another Wency Cornejo warhorse, "Next In Line," she led the Hail Mary the Queen Children's Choir and 105 Pasay City public school students in a stirring "Panatang Makabayan." The scene was obvious, trite, literal, but it also brought back memories of reciting the "Panata" as a child, and meaning every word of it.

If only for this, and for the rare fervor with which the "Lupang Hinirang" was sung in the end by the clearly moved crowd, "Hinabing Gunita," directed by Alex Cortez, deserves to be well-remembered. Let this report be a modest memorial to it.

E-mail the author at gcadiz@inquirer.com.ph

Denis Matsuev conquers Manila

By Pablo A. Tariman

THE RUSSIAN CULTURAL FESTIVAL IN Manila closed with the Manila debut of Russian pianist Denis Matsuev, who was the soloist in two big concertos with the San Miguel Philharmonic Orchestra under the baton of Felix Korobov.

The two concertos—Tchaikovsky's First and Rachmaninoff's Second—are Manila's favorites, but it's been a long time since the country has heard a first-rate Russian musician since the visit of violinist Vladimir Spivakov and pianist Yevgeny Malinin, among others.

Opening with Glinka's Ruslan and Ludmilla Overture, the San Miguel orchestra elicited a totally new sound and it was an indication that it was under a very competent visiting Russian conductor.

Conductor Korobov was at once surprised that the audience didn't stop clapping only with the opening number. When he reappeared, he acknowledged the orchestra's wind section and percussion players, who were in top shape that night.

To be sure, pianist Matsuev did not show off his big tones in the first few bars of Tchaikovsky's First. This concerto has lots of flashy sections where a soloist can go overboard and make them an excuse to project his virtuoso skills.

But one could see that Matsuev was concerned with the music and how he could make something fresh out of this tired, old war horse of the Romantic period. The result was a totally new Tchaikovsky with its underlying music intact.

It was easy to see that the pianist has technique within his easy reach, but he used it in the service of the music. In the first movement, he was almost cautious without being less spontaneous. But when he launched his cadenzas in this concerto, you realize you were seeing a conscientious musician who didn't care about the facetious label of "virtuoso."

After the excitement of the Tchaikovsky concerto, it was difficult to find a place for another big offering for the night (almost like having two main courses for dinner).

But in the first few bars of Rachmaninoff's C Minor Concerto, it was obvious the audience was getting another vintage Russian feast with all the right ingredients intact.

It was a relief to see Matsuev's very lyrical moments in the second movement, and again to see his massive tones and chords blending magically with the orchestra in the last movement.

PIANIST Denis Matsuev

Korobov was the epitome of precision, and how he was able to elicit real music from the orchestra's limited ranks was really magical. For once, you heard the big sound, but the show-stealer was the orchestra's wind section, which the conductor always acknowledged at the end of every piece.

Finally, we saw what the San Miguel Philharmonic was capable of, given a chance to tackle a purely classical repertoire with an excellent conductor and soloist. We saw many new faces in the orchestra and, in the beginning, we were pessimistic if this young concertmaster and relatively young principals could deliver.

With that cheering, euphoric audience, it was obvious Manila has discovered a new international piano sensation in the person of Denis Matsuev. Was it second nature to him to play two concertos in one evening?

At one time, he confided, he actually played three concertos—Prokofiev's Third, Tchaikovsky's First and Rachmaninoff's Second.

As it was, Matsuev was just the right artist to close the Russian Cultural Festival in Manila. The festival celebrated the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Russian Federation and the Philippines.

Here and there

That was a revealing concert featuring Jonathan Arevalo Coo, not as pianist, but as conductor in the culminating concert of the Adventist Philharmonic Orchestra Development Program with pianist Ingrid Sala Santamaria as soloist in Chopin's Piano Concerto No. 1 in E Minor.

Coo is highly promising as a conductor and it is a coincidence that he has a pianist as soloist in a concerto he knows so well. This is the first time I heard the Adventist University Chamber Orchestra, and I must say that Coo made the orchestra sound so professional. I look forward to Coo's complete transformation as conductor.

By the way, Coo's concert paid tribute to National Artist for Music Antonino Buenaventura.

It was a relief to see Matsuev's very lyrical moments in the second movement, and again to see his massive tones and chords blending magically with the orchestra in the last movement

PIANIST Ingrid Sala Santamaria with pianist-turned-conductor Jonathan Coo

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Pinoy conductor joins international choral fest jury

FIDEL GENER CALALANG JR., multi-awarded Filipino composer and the conductor of the University of Santo Tomas Singers, will sit in the international jury of the 19th International Festival of Academic Choirs in the Paradubice, Czech Republic, June 28-July 5.

The annually held competition for mixed, female and chamber choirs is Europe's biggest gathering of outstanding university and academic choirs from all over the world. This year, with a special category on the music of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and Robert Schumann, the contest will take place at the Knights Hall of the Paradubice Castle and the University Hall, Paradubice.

Calalang will be joined in by other members of the jury from Poland, Austria, Slovakia and Czech Republic. He will also take part in the 2006 Europa Cantat Festival and Choral Workshop in Mainz, Germany, in mid-July.

Calalang is the coordinator of the Conducting Department of the UST Conservatory of Music, where he is also a professor in Piano. He is the founder and conductor of the internationally acclaimed UST Singers, which has won 45 top prizes from choral competitions around the world including the historic five first prizes with four 100-percent scores won in all categories at the Festa Musicale Festival of Songs, Olomouc, Czech Republic, in 2002.

Last summer, he led the choir in its successful 12th International Concert Tour of Asia where he also conducted a lecture on Philippine music in Taiwan, organized by the Taipei Philharmonic Foundation for Culture and Education and supported by our National Commission for Culture and the Arts.

Awarded Most Outstanding Alumnus of UST for Performing Arts, Calalang was a member of the international jury in the 1st Welsh National Choral Competition in the United Kingdom in 2003. He also won the Best Conductor Prize at the 2002 Tonen International Choral Competition in the Netherlands.

FIDEL Gener Calalang Jr.

Fast-food mogul sings classics in FEU concert

MCDONALD'S PHILIPPINES' chair George Yang sheds his corporate image and reveals his artistic character in a musical presentation at the Far Eastern University (FEU) auditorium on June 30, with sopranos Jennifer Uy and Joanna Go.

Titled "George and Friends: For the Love of Music, An Encore," the show features well-loved operatic arias and Broadway duets of Yang with Jennifer and Joanna such as "The Prayer," "All I Ask of You," and solos "Nessun Dorma," "This is the Moment" and "You Raise Me Up."

They will be joined by Chorus Philippines Quartet under the direction of Joy Nilo in the rendition of select pieces.

After building one of the most successful fast-food chains in the country, Yang forayed into music five years ago in pursuit of his childhood passion. He has performed with pop singers José Mari Chan, Pops Fernandez, Kuh Ledesma and Ana Fegi, and has three CD albums to his credit.

A natural tenor, Yang's thirst for music motivated him to take voice lessons for opera pieces and aria.

Go is a graduate of the University of British Columbia Opera Performance program in Canada and has performed in prestigious classical productions both here and abroad with renowned orchestras.

Uy was as a scholar at the New School of Classical Music in Canada and later studied with famed mezzo-soprano Inna Golsband. In 2001, she represented the Philippines and Canada in the 2000 Maria Callas (Opera) Grand Prix in Athens, Greece.

The event is a musical offering of the FEU president's Committee on Culture under Rustica Carpio.

Shows are at 10:45 a.m. and 3:15 p.m. Call 7364897.

DJS from Germany, Singapore, UK and Indonesia share techniques and mixing styles at the workshops held by Asia-Europe Foundation's "I'mPulse Beijing" program.

DJ Sztyepp (Hungary) plays his music as participants from Italy and The Netherlands look on at an art gallery café in Beijing's Factory 798 art district.

DJ Daito Manabe (Japan), a sound designer, plays electronic music at the lounge area of Tango, a popular dance club in Beijing

GES-E, a DJ/producer from UK regarded as an innovator in Asian dance music after he merged traditional Tabla loops with break-beats in the '90s

DJ Ges-E, who advised the participants to first learn the basics of jockeying vinyl records before playing MP3s.

DJ r-H (Singapore) at Tango

Music and art 'mix' in Beijing

DJS from Indonesia and Spain exchange tricks of the trade at the music camp.

By James P. Ong
Contributor
Photos by Walkscreen

CHINESE DJ Yang Bing, famous with Beijing's clubbers for his fat bass, funky tech-house style, at Tango

DJS from Asia and Europe exchange tips and tricks of DJing.

THE MULTIMEDIA installation by German artists Walkscreen added visual texture to the music of State of Bengal.

LOCAL Chinese and foreigners danced the night away at the live performances at Tango, which capped the I'mPulse Beijing music camp.

THE ROOM THUMPED WITH MUSIC and the crowd of almost 30 people was on the verge of dancing. Except it was afternoon, the lights were bright and they weren't in a dance club—they were at Vibes Art Club in Beijing, an art gallery café transformed into a workshop room for five days during the city's most talked-about annual arts festival.

The occasion? "I'mPulse Beijing," a music camp for disc jockeys organized by the Singapore-based Asia-Europe Foundation, and one of several activities in the three-week-long Dashanzi International Arts Festival-popularly known as the "798 Festival" because of its location, an industrial factory complex called Factory 798 and which is filled with Bauhaus-style buildings built in the 1950s. It began housing artists' studios in 2000 and is now home to several studios, galleries, performance spaces and trendy cafés.

"I'mPulse aims to encourage fresh minds to pursue the development of their music concepts by learning from each other," says Asef's Vanini Belarmino, one of three curators of the eight-day event, which culminated in two nights of live performances at one of China's most popular dance club.

The I'mPulse music camp was first launched at the Philippine High School for the Arts in Los Baños, Laguna, last year. It was attended by classical and traditional musicians from Asia and Europe. A second event gathered traditional singers in Ireland that same year.

The challenge of putting up the music camp in Beijing, according to Belarmino, lay in the fact that DJing is technically not considered an art form, though both organizers and participants feel otherwise.

"By focusing on a dynamic artistic discipline highly popular not only among DJ practicioners but also with young people," Belarmino explains, "part of the aspiration [of the program] was to embrace both its participants and audiences in an environment created in the rhythm of the mind, body and soul shaped by music."

"There is a process of creation that makes it art," argues Sam Zaman, known in the clubbing scene as State of Bengal, and one of the key DJ/producers to arise from the new cutting-edge British-Asian music scene.

He fuses Bengali folk music with Western dance beats—a sound so unique and danceable it has attracted the likes of Bjork, who asked Zaman to open for her world tour and remix the track "Hunter" for her album, "Homogenic," in 1997.

"You will have to explain yourself as an artist," says Ges-E, another DJ/producer from the United Kingdom known for fusing Eastern and Western beats.

He merged traditional Tabla loops with break-beats and soon became regarded as an innovator in Asian dance music. He went on to release the critically acclaimed Eastern Drum and Breaks on his own label Nasha Records.

"To start becoming a DJ, first you must create a small community that is into your music—and then that circle grows," Ges-E adds.

Both Zaman and Ges-E held talks with 18 DJs on the "representation, translation and migration of Asian and European DJ culture" at the workshops.

The European countries represented in the event were Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, UK and Slovakia. There were also participants from China, Indonesia, Spain, Japan, Singapore. There was no Philippine representative.

The workshop began with a no-agenda meeting where the 18 participants were asked what they wanted to explore while in China. They were then broken into small groups. Some of the DJs paired off and decided to collaborate during the live performance later in the week.

The DJs took turns talking about the club culture in their respective countries and what influenced their choice of music. The rest shared the tricks of their trade, while some lamented the fact that music has become so disposable with the advent of MP3 technology.

There was also a heated discussion about vinyl records versus electronic music. "I'm not a DJ in the more traditional sense," said DJ Istar of Belgium in an interview with That's Beijing magazine. "I don't own a lot of vinyl, I don't really beatmatch, and my work isn't really dance-oriented. I do, however, perform electronic music, mostly with my laptop."

Ges-E from the UK advised the participants—and those who want to become a DJ—to learn about vinyl records first instead of going straight to computer-generated music.

STATE of Bengal's Sam Zaman, a guest DJ at the I'mPulse Beijing music camp in Beijing

Daito Manabe, a very famous sound engineer in Japan who has performed in high-profile store openings of fashion boutiques in Tokyo, also cautions that the quality of computer sound is much lower than that of a turntable deck and a mixer.

I'mPulse also incorporated multimedia installations from German artists Walkscreen at Tango, the dance club that hosted the two nights of live performance by the participating DJs.

Two video walls were installed, where a series of images and video clips depicting daily life in Beijing were projected while the paying crowd of almost a thousand danced away until three in the morning.

They were truly nights of global music.

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